

# THE LITTLE MEMORIAL

treating of the good, & fruitful  
use, of the holy Sacra-  
ments, of *Penance* and  
*Communion*.

WRITTEN  
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*And translated into English.*

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*D M 1738*

## THE PREFACE TO the Reader.

**L**EVVIS of GRANADA, of the Order of S. Dominick, that excellent and diuine Man of our tyme, for the building and polishing of the spirituall tabernacle of Christes Church, amoungst many other his notable monuments, intituled one, The Memoriall of a Chriltian life. The first part whereof intreating principally of the Sacraments of Pennance, and the sacred Communion, is to the singular benefit of our countrey, translated into the English tongue. God, whose hand is not abbreviated, hath in the same Nation, rayfed him vp a cōpanion, of the order of the Society of Iesus, for the prosecuting of the same worke: one of whose small Treatises I haue beere likewise translated, as desirous to enrich our Countrey with so singular a treasure. And because it is an Addition to a

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former worke, and so by the Author culled; a name nothing fitting it now, when it cometh forth alone, therefore haue I thought good after the imitation of that learned man, especially because as his, so this also containeth a brieft note, of that which euery good Christian ought often to practise, concerning the Sacraments of Penance, and the holy Communion, to put it forth with the title of a Memorial: and the name (title) I haue added, both for distinction from the former, and also for that it is comprised in a farre lesse volume. And although denied it cannot be, that not only G R A N A D A, but many others, haue learnedly intreated of the same subiect, yet who knoweth not, that as mens vaines be diuers in writing, so likewise their affections in reading not all one, and therefore both with profit and pleasure, many good workes may be published of the same

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same matter, the latter either for methode, perspicuity, or some other notable thing, adding somewhat which in the former was wanting, and as it were with Ruth gathering vp such eares of corne, as slipped from the reapers hands: and that such labours may fruitfully be enterprised besides reason, and common practise, we haue also t<sup>e</sup> example of the fower Euangelists, who by direction of the holy Ghost, as with singular vnity, so with profitable variety, wrote the same life and death of our sauour Christ. This booke therefore, though it intreateth of Confession and Communion, the subiect of diuers excellent discourses, yet is it worthy to be imbraced, seing the manner and scope thereof, is of that quality, as I thinke few can read it, that will repent their small paines employed: and some happily be of opinion, that albeit others with S. Iohn came first to the



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monument, yet that this Author with Saint Peter entred first in: and all such, whose harts God shall so effectually touch, as that they will not only read, but also carefully practise, may with much more reason blesse the tyme, that they met with so beauenly a maister, for the sauing of their own soules, then euer did David blesse Abigail, and her wise speech, hindring him from the killing of another mans body. The principal intent of this Memorial is, to inflame al with the lone of the Sacraments, and to stir vp our dull spirits, often to repaire vnto those diuine fountaines of grace, from which so many and rare benefits do flow: to discouer also the vsuall disorders, into which not only those that be carelesse, but euen the deuout seruants of God do sometymes fall, when they go to confession, and do receaue the blessed Sacrament; togeather with singular remedies, how we may auoyd al such inconuenien-

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ueniences, and so free our selues, more and more from sinne, purchase greater abundance of grace in this world, and eternall felicity in the world to come: all which pointes he doth so excellently performe, and like a diuine Phisitian search out the secret and lurking diseases of our soule, and prescribe such sweet and beauenly receits, that there is almost none so voide of spirituall sense, but by reading, shal find their conscience touched: nor any proceeded so far in piety, but that they may make great benefite of this small Treatise; and generally all that sincerely desire the amendment of their life, and increase of vertue, shall feelee their hartes burning in them, as the two Disciples did when our Sauour walked in their company, and opened them the Scriptures.

One thing there is which the author in discoursing of such sinnes, as many confesse not through culpable ignorance, hath

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omitted, to wit, the dangerous error  
of many yonge persons, that without  
the knowledge or consent of their pa-  
rents, bestow themselves in marriage:  
and another no lesse dangerous then the  
former, if not more, and that is to make  
priuy contractes, whereof not only such  
as liue vnder the charge of their pa-  
rents, but others also of all estates and  
callinges be sometyme found guilty. Of  
these pointes though very necessary,  
he maketh no mention, because the  
councell of Trent making all priuy con-  
tractes of no force, hath freed them from  
such inconueniences, which is not so here  
in our countrey for lacke of publication,  
a thing required by the Councell before  
that decree can take any place: and  
therefore I haue thought good to say som-  
what, both concerning the one and the o-  
ther, (because they be sins very rife, and  
be accompanied with many and great  
mischises, especially the second, as discord  
betwixt

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betwixt houses, ruines of families, the perpetuall state of adultery, and not seldome a continuall torment of conscience, as daily experience teacheth) to the end that such as feare God, & be desirous to saue their soules, may know what herein they haue to follow and practise.

As it is certaine, that the marriage of children ( being of yeares requisite, and no other impediment hindring it ) contracted freely without their parentes consent, is perfect matrimony, and can not either by them, or the temporal magistrate be broken : certaine also that children may sometyme vpon iust & good causes, marry without the knowledge or consent of their parents, as for example, when they would marry them to an hereticke, & in some few other cases : so most certaine it is, that vsually & for the greater part, children do very much offende God, in contractinge marriage either without their knowledge, or against the

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minds.



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mindes of their parents, seing it belongeth to their charge to provide for their children: and their experience and loue towards them is such, that neither can they be so easily deceaued, nor yet prefer them to any matches, then such as be good, and most conuenient for their estate: and in holy Scripture we read, that the marriage of the children, was rather commanded vnto the parents, then vnto them: for God speaking of the Cananites sayth thus: Thou shalt not giue thy daughter to his Son, nor thou shalt not take his daughter for thy Sonne: And blessed Iacob, vpon the commaundement of his Father Isaac, very obediently married the daughter of Laban, and not of such as be had forbidden.

Seing then marriage is oftentimes with sin contracted by the children, for lacke of their parents knowledge or consent, and sometyme without any sinne at all:

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all: such as live in feare of God, & willingly would not offend him, ought not herein to rely vpon themselves, and their own partial affection, & so to determine that in this and that case, they may without any respect to their parents consent, make their owne choice: but let them craue the aduise of some wise and discreet ghostly Father, and with humility submit themselves to his iudgment: and in any wise let them take heed that they do not herein, refuse the resolution haply of many, & rest vpon the opinion of some one whome they haue found out, because he doth most fitte their fancy, and best please their passion: for that were a certayne argument, that they sought not sincerely the truth, nor the honor of God; but rather a cloake for their sinne, and a few could figge leaues with Adam to couer their naked soule. Parentes also that be the true seruants of God, ought herein to proceed with great moderati-

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on, & not to presse their children so much with their authority, as by seare & violent meanes to draw them cleane contrary to their owne mind and liking, for that were to take away that Christian liberty which ought to be in marriage, & without which, as shall straight waies be handled, it is no marriage at all, & what pitifull effects follow such vnfortunate matches, where the terror of the parents more preuaileth, then the reasonable loue and liking of the children, daily experience doth teach vs.

Concerning secret marriages & contractes, as the danger is far greater, so it deserueth a deeper consideration: for many hapily think that herein either no sinne is committed, or a very litle one, seing matrimony is a thing most free, & therefore al at their liberty to contract as they please. But herein are they much deceaued: for albeit most free it is in this sence that none ought to be enforced thereunto,

but

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but must willingly and freely giue their owne consent: and therefore if one should by any kind of violent meanes be compelled to marry another, to whome in their hart they gaue no consent; most certaine it is, that it were no matrimony at all: yea the violence & feare may be such that albeit inward consent be wrung out & gotten, yet is it not marriage for lacke of free consent. I touch this matter briefly, as being not that whereof I mean now to intreat: if any haue herein any difficulty, and desire further resolution, let then craue the counsell of those that be vertuous and learned, with that purity of intention before mentioned. Yet for all this, in other thinges marriage is not so free, that men or womē may either marry with whom theylist, or in what māner they please. For by the law of God, and the Church, they are forbidden to marry with such as be allied to them in certayne degrees of consanguinity



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guinity and affinity: and if any should presume so to do, besides a great mortall sin committed, the marriage also is of no force, and their state damnable. Neither can they marry in such manner as they please: for to omit other cases, and to speake of that which we have now in hand; If any heere in our country, contract marriage priuately, although the marriage be of force, yet cannot the manner of doing be excused from sin, & that such a one, as doth oftentimes plunge the into a perpetuall misery; a point worthy to be deeply considered of all sorts of persons: for what case can be more lamentable, then when two haue contracted secretly, and made themselves man and wife before God: and yet afterward, either vpon the dislike of their friends, or discontentment growing between themselves, they go backe, marry openly others, and so all their life time continue in the state of adultery, and that without

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out all helpe, in respect of any outward court or consistory: for seeing the first marriage was secret, the Church can take thereof no knowledg, and so provide no remedy. For the auoyding of this so infinite an inconuenience, the Church of God, tending like a carefull mother the good of her children, hath vtterly forbidden such kindes of contracts, as the councell of Trent testifieth in these words: The holy Church of God vpon iust causes both alwaies detested & forbidden secret marriages. He therefore that is the seruant of God, and would not willingly wounde his soule with sinne, nor offend against the precept of the Church, nor yet cast himselfe into a sea of miseries, ought to refraine from all such priuy contracts, and as much as can be, to obserue the decreet of the foresaid Councell, which is to contract matrimony in the presence of a Priest, & two or three witnesses, at the least. Good counsell

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sell also it is, especially for yong persons, whose iudgments are weaker, experience lesse, & their passiōs cōmonly more strong, not to make so much as any secret promises of marriage, no though conditionall: as if such a portio or ioynter may be procured, or if my friendes shall be content, & such like; for in processe of time, much talking of such matters, & other like accidents, make them afterward to doubt, if any future breach happen, whether they be cleere in conscience, and may securely marry else where or no, and so all such kind of promises in conclusiō, serue for nothing else but to afflict the soule, & to weary the conscience with many scruples: frō all which miseries they be cleare, that keepe themselves free from all priuy contracts, and secret promises of what manner soeuer, and do neuer bind themselves, but in such sort as before was mentioned: or else expect vntill their matrimony be publicquely solemnized.

Alibough

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Although I said before that the state of him that was priuily contracted, and did after marry opely with another, was without help: yet God forbid that any should in that case despaire, for God who is rich in mercy, and will not the death of a sinner, like the good Samaritane, hath in store oyle and wine to powre into the woundes of him that hath thus pitifully fallen into the hands of theeues, & is left halfe dead: and therefore though true it be, that such a one, as I sayd before, hath no remedy in any worldly courte or consistory, yet in the court of conscience, meanes are lesse for the sauing of his sinfull soule. The medicine I confesse falleth out ordinarily to be very sower & sharpe, yet if men willingly venture the the losse of a limme for the preseruing of the corruptible body, though haply they fall into that extremity without any fault of their owne: no reason haue they to refuse any remedy, though neuer so penitentiall,  
for

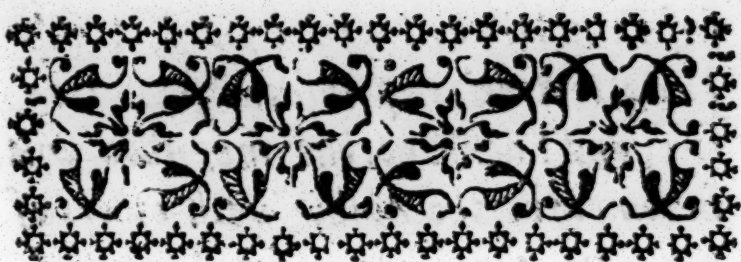


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for the sauing of their immortall soule :  
seinge especially by their owne folly they  
haue giuen themselues so deep a wound.  
VVherefore such as find their conscience  
herein troubled, let them make choice of  
some excellent, wise, discret, and lear-  
ned ghostly Father, for the well menaging  
of this busines, being so important & dan-  
gerous. Thus much gentle reader haue I  
thought good to insert here in the preface,  
being a thing passing necessary ( and yet  
omitted by the Author vpon the reason  
before mentioned ) and as I verily hope,  
that which will be the occasion for the pre-  
seruing of such as feare God, from ma-  
ny great sins, which otherwise through  
ignorance they might fall into. Now no  
more remaineth, but that thou wouldest  
for thy further direction, to the end thou  
mayest auoid many impediments which  
hinder others that be carelesse from re-  
ceauing that abundant comodity which  
is gained by deuout frequenting of con-  
fession

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session and the holy Communion, vouch-  
safe attentively to peruse this small trea-  
tise, and I doubt not but that thou wilt  
in comparing the Author with others of  
our time, that intreat of the same mat-  
ter, say of him as they did in the gospell  
of our Saviour: Neuer did there man  
so speake as this man. If thou doub-  
test (as Nathaniel did of Christ) and  
demand how in so small a booke, so great  
learning or deuotion can be contained: I  
willingly surcease from other answers &  
say with S. Philip: Come and see:  
Read and iudge.



## A TABLE OF THE

### CHAPTERS.

- I. **O**F the great necessity, which all Christians haue, often to frequent the Sacraments of Confession, and the holy Communion.
- II. Of a certaine disorder, into which some do fall, by excusing & defending their sins, in the Sacrament of confession, & how they are therein to be mortified.
- III. Of the disorder in confessing such sinnes as be certaine, with doubtfull words, and which do not signify any sinne at all.
- IIII. Of the disorder in confessing veniall sins, without hauing for them any griefe, or purpose of amendmēt.

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- V. Of a certain carelesnesse which vsually is found among such as be desirous to serue God, concerning the examination of their conscience before confession, and the great harmes which do follow thereof.
- VI. Of some sins of ignorance, which a man knoweth not, nor confesseth to wit, to be carelesse to know wherunto in particuler he is bound, & to omit the works of iustice & charity.
- VII. Of diners kinds of wicked superstitions, not known to many, & sometimes not confessed through culpable ignorance.
- VIII. Of sins committed by playing, & gaming: and beholding of vaine & hurtfull sights, into which many do fall through culpable ignorance.
- IX. Of other sins more secret, as pride of our own proper iudgement, and selfe will, which many do not know nor confesse through culpable ignorance.
- X. Of a very profitable remedy against the harme which commeth by secret sins, and that is euery day to examine



*A Table of*

examine our conscience: & the manner how this is to be done .

**XI.** Of another singular meanes for a man to deliuer himfelfe from secret sins , & that his confessions may be more fruitfull; & that is to haue one certain ghostly Father, vnto whō he ought ordinarily to confes his sins .

**XII.** Of another excellent remedy; to deliuer our selues from the harme of secret sins , and to supply the defects of our former confessions , and that is with care and diligence , to make a generall confession.

**XIII.** Of such defects as be an impediment to many which do often communicate , that they receaue not the plentiful fruit of the Blessed Sacrament .

**XIIII.** How for the receauing of more abundant fruit of the holy communion , conuenient it is to purify the soule from veniall sinnes.

**XV.** How to receaue much fruit of the blessed communion , necessary it is for a man to prepare himselfe with recollection, & meditation: & what manner

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manner of meditations are good to be vsed for that purpose.

XVI. Of that outward reuerence, humililty, and modesty, with which we ought to come vnto the B. Sacrament.

XVII. Of that quiet and repose, with which we ought to come vnto the holy communion: & what thanks are to be giuen vnto God after the receauing thereof.

XVIII. How to abstaine from the B. Sacrament without iust cause, is an impediment to spirituall profit: and how that neither for negligence, or lacke of sensible deuotion, a man should giue ouer the holy communion.

XIX. How for scruples & vaine feares, we ought not to abstaine from the Sacrament of the Altar.

XX. With what moderatiō we ought to frequent the holy cōmunion, that we do not therein exceed, nor do any thing contrary to due reuerence: & how we ought to leaue this to the iudgment of a discret ghostly Father.

XXI.

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**XXI.** Of such rules as holy men prescribe, concerning the often receiving of the B. Sacrament.

**XXII.** Of that discretion which ghostly Fathers ought herein to observe, according to the doctrine of holy men.

**XXIII.** Whether the holy communion ought daily to be given to some persons of our time.


THE



THE  
LITTLE  
MEMORIAL  
OF A CHRIS-  
TIAN LIFE.

CHAP. I.

*Wherein is briefly declared, the  
great necessity, which al Chri-  
stians have, often to frequent  
the Sacrament of Confession,  
and the holy Communion.*

 OR as much as  
this booke, is pu-  
blished for the cō-  
modity of such  
pertons, as be resolved to serue  
A God,



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God, by setting downe before their eyes, such meanes as they haue to vse, both for the preserving them selues, and also proceeding forward in his diuine seruice; and further to exhort them, to put those meanes in practise: and seing one of them, and that of great force and efficacy, is to frequent the Sacraments, that is, often to be confessed, and to receaue the Holy Communion; two things are here for this purpose, especially to be handled.

The first is, to exhort all faythfull Christians, often to repaire to these Holy Sacraments, by declaring the great  
and

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wonderful commodities, which by meanes of them be obtayned. The second is, to teach and instruct them, concerning the true and laudable vse of the Sacrament of Confession, and the Holy Sacrament of the Aultar. And because to intreate copiously of these poynts, were too much for this small Booke; therefore touching this matter, I intend only to speake of that, which to me shall seeme most necessary, and worthy to be noted, of such as be resolved to serue God. The first poynt therefor which I meane to handle, shall be briefly to set downe before our eyes, how necessary it is,

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for all Christians, often to frequent the diuine Sacraments of Confession, and the Sacred Communion: the second shal be to prosecute in particuler, such abuses and disorders, as be more secret, & into which, euen those that be determined to serue God, do not seldome fall.

Concerning the first. Many and very effectuall be the reasons, which ought to moue & inuite all faythfull Christians to frequent the Sacraments, that is, to confesse themselves, and communicate once in eight, or fifteene dayes, or at least once a moneth. For if they be such persons, as God hath

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hath vouchsafed so to fauour,  
that since their last confessiō,  
they haue not fallen into any  
mortall sinne; very necessary  
it is for them so to doe, both to  
preferue themselves in Gods  
grace, and to increase in the  
same, and also in all other ver-  
tuous and heauenly gifts: to  
make themselves dayly more  
acceptable in the sight of God:  
to be more fit instruments to  
set forth his glory, and to ad-  
uance the good of his Church:  
to make their saluation more  
certaine: to lay vp the treasure  
of greater merits in eternall  
felicity: to procure more light,  
and strength, both to know,  
and ouercome all the tempta-  
tions



tions and deceipts of the enemies of our soule : to doe the works of vertue, with greater facility and sweetnes : to passe ouer this life , with more peace, and spirituall comfort : to be at our death more assisted and holpen of God with plenty of heavenly succor : & so finally to depart this life, with more hope of saluation, greater quiet, and comfort of soule. For these, & such other like effects, and singular commodities, very necessary it is, I say , that the seruant of God should often repaire to the Sacraments. For albeit since his last confession , hee hath not fallen into any mortall sinne ,  
yet

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yet certaine it is , that he hath  
cōmitted many venial, wherof  
some he doth know , & others  
he doth not , and yet for all  
that not to be excused, because  
he might well haue known  
them : & these venial or small  
sinnes , although they doe not  
spoil the soule of Gods grace,  
yet doe they great harme, and  
put a man in such a case , that  
he doth thereby fall the sooner  
into those that be mortall , as  
else where hath been handled.  
Certaine likewise it is , that a  
man is continually assaulted  
with dayly and diuers tenta-  
tions by the deuill, the world,  
the flesh , and our corrupt na-  
ture , which doe put him in

great danger, to fall into mortall sinne : and many of them be secret, and very perilous, & therefore greatly necessary it is, that he should alwaies haue a remedy to deliuer his soule from veniall sinnes, and great need he hath of dayly strength, to resist all tentations : great need of the continual dew of Gods grace from heauen, to mitigate his wicked inclinations: and all this doth he find in the Holy Sacraments of Confession, & Communion, if he doe often frequent them. And although it cannot be denied, but that there bee other remedies, for the purging of veniall sinnes; so most certaine

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certaine it is , that this of frequenting the Sacraments, if it bee done as it ought , is the best, and most effectuall of all other. Of the wonderfull effects, which the blessed Sacrament of the Altar worketh in them that doe frequent it *S. Bernard* giueth an excellent testimony : these be his words. *The most pretious Sacrament of the body of our Lord, doth worke in vs two effects : The one is, that it doth diminish the sense of veniall sinnes : and the other is, that it doth wholly take away all consent to mortall sinnes.* And the holy man, doth proue this to bee true, by that experience, which the seruants of God do

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find



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find in their owne hartes ,  
to whome he doth there speak  
in this manner. *If any of you,*  
*doe not now so often feele , ney-*  
*ther yet so great motions as be-*  
*fore tyme you did , of anger , of*  
*enuie , of carnality , and other*  
*vices ; let him giue thanks to the*  
*body and bloud of Christ , which*  
*he receaueth in the Holy Sacra-*  
*ment , because this is the effect*  
*thereof : and let him take comfort*  
*therein , for as much as God by*  
*this meanes doth cure and make*  
*sound the corruption of our na-*  
*ture . Thus writeth S. Bernard .*  
*And the selfe same thing is*  
*confest by all holy men : and*  
*the general council of Trent ,*  
*doth confirme the same , de-*  
*claring .*

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claring, that the blessed Sacrament doth worke this in all such, as receaue it with due preparation, to wit, that it doth deliuer them from consenting to tentations, pacify their passions, giue them victory ouer their enemies, preserve and increase them in good life, by giuing force and strength for all these foresayd ends. And from hence it cometh, that in all Citties and townes, where there be many, that often repaire to the Sacraments, many there be also, which all their life long continue in Gods grace, without euer falling into any mortall sinne. And al ordinary ghost-

ly Fathers, be witnesses of this truth, who find by experience, that Christian people doe receive this great commodity by frequenting the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar with devotion and a vertuous disposition.

These reasons alledged, are sufficient to perswade all good Catholikes, though not guilty in their conscience, of any mortall sin, often to confess themselves, and to communicate: but if since their last being at confession they have committed any deadly sinne, then besides the former reasons, greater necessity have they streight waies, and without

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out delay, to goe vnto the Sacrament of Confession : to wit , that by meanes thereof, they may come out of that damnable state , and deliuer themselues , from all those mischiefes & harmes , which frō that kind of sin do grow : as to be hated of God , and to liue in disgrace of the Blessed Trinity : to bee abhorred of heauenly Maiesty , and to be captiues and slaues of Sathan the prince of darkenesse : to be subiect, and obedient to his will , and to lose the great value and merits of all the good works of their life past : to be in apparant danger of falling into greater sins , into greater blindnes,



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blindnes, and hardenesse of hart, and finally into euerlasting damnation. From all these euils, and mischiefes, & many more annexed to these, that man is deliuered, who after due preparation, purgeth his soule streight waies by confession. And although true it be, that only by contrition, with a purpose to confesse in time conuenient, a man may deliuer himselfe, from the state of mortall sinne: yet to haue contrition without help of the Sacrament, is an hard thing, vnto which few doe attaine: for as much, as true contrition, conteineth in it selfe, a great hatred of sinne,  
by

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by reason wherof, the soule doth in will abhorre and detest, all mortall sinne, more then all other evils in the world, and withall a firme purpose of amendment of life: and so resolutely determineth, neuer more to consent to any deadly sinne whatsoeuer, neither for interest or commodity, nor to auoide any paine or misery of this life: and together with this, necessary it is, that the principall thing, which moueth a man to this hatred of sin, & amendment of his life, be the loue of God aboue all thinges. And because men commonly vpon their forsaking of mortall sin,  
do

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doe it not at the first , for this supernaturall loue of God , but principally for feare of Hell and damnation: for this cause a very hard and rare thing it is , to haue Contrition without the help of the Sacraments: whereof it commeth to passe, that such as haue sinned mortally , & go not to the Sacrament of confession, commonly they continue still in the same bad estate, and so be subject all those mischiefes and dangers , which accompany mortall sinne , as before hath beene said . And the reason heereof is , because ordinarily without help of the sacraments, men ariue not to haue  
con-

contrition, which yet is necessary, to come out of mortall sinne: but when they go to confession with that preparation which is requisite, if their soule be infected, streight waies are they deliuered from mortall sin, and from all those mischiefes before mentioned: for when a man confesseth himselfe hauing a perfect hatred of sinne, and a firme purpose of amendment, although the principall reason which moueth him, to forsake sin, be the feare of his owne damnation; yet with the helpe of the Sacrament, shall he obtain Gods grace: and this is that which Deuines teach, and the holy



holy Councell of Trent doth declare, to wit, that of attrite he becamer, contrite. For such was the infinite mercy of God, now in the law of grace, as to bestow such efficacy vpon his Sacraments, that to him that wāteth grace, and doth not of his part, put any stoppe, or impediment, grace by meanes of them is giuen him, and to him that is already in grace, the same is increased and augmented.

These be in summe, the most excellent commodities which faithfull people doe gaine by often repaying to the Sacraments of Confession,

on, & Communion: & these  
bee the pittifull and most grie-  
uous euils, from which they  
be deliuered He therfore that  
is desirous of saluation, and  
resolved to serue God, & pon-  
dereth well this point, how  
can he let so great commodi-  
ties slip out of his hands? how  
dareth he aduenture the losse  
of so great gaine? how can he  
excuse himselfe from frequen-  
ting confession, the spring of  
life, and saluation, by meanes  
whereof he is deliuered from  
such notable euils of death,  
finne, and everlasting damna-  
tion? and such purity of soule  
obtained, such diuine & spi-  
rituall beauty, and such trea-  
sures

20 THE LITTLE

fures of grace and glory? And how can he containe himselfe and not go often to the holy Sacrament of the Aultar? the bread of life, the death of sin, the wel- spring of vertues, the medicine of our passions, the staffe and stay of our weaknes, the treasure of graces, the most pleasant repast of al heavenly comfort, the roote of immortality, and the fountain of al goodnes. And thus much may suffice, concerning the first point. Now will I come to the second, which is the principall thing that I intended to intreat of, and wherof in very deede, we stand most in need, & ought carefully

fully to be instructed in the same.

CHAP. II.

*Of a certaine disorder, into which some doe fall, by excusing and defending their sinnes, in the Sacrament of Confession: and how they are therein to be mortified.*

**M**Y purpose is not heere to note great and manifest defects, into which such as be carelesse of saluation v-  
sually doe fall: as to come to confessiō without hauing before hand thought vpon their sinnes: to conceale in confes-  
sion



sion some great sinne, either for feare or worldely shame: to confesse their sinnes without any purpose of amending their former life, and to auoid all dangerous occasions of mortall sinne: which be such notable defects, and hainous sinnes, that they do wholly hinder all that fruit which should come by confession, & make it nothing worth at all, and so bound they are to confesse againe the selfe same sinnes, and also that fault of sacriledge, which they then committed in making so wicked a confession.

But my intent is, to note certaine negligences and defects;

# MEMORIAL. 23

fects, which proceede from the wicked inclinatio<sup>n</sup>s of our corrupt nature, and be found in such persons as are desirous of saluation, and resolved to lead a vertuous life, which conuenient it is, that they should auoid, by mortifying the rootes from whence they doe spring. One of these disorders is, for a man in confession to excuse and defend his sinnes, putting vpon them diuers sorts of colours, to the end they may seeme not so grieuous and filthy, as indeed they be. As for excuse of themselves, some say, that they sinned because they could not choose: which is most false, for

24 THE LITTLE

for God doth not bind any to that which is impossible. Others say, that although they gaue consent vnto the sinne, as in desiring of reuenge, or some vncleane act, yet did that cogitation quickly passe away, and stayed not long in their hart: & by this meanes, though the consent were deliberate, yet woulde they be thought, not to haue committed any sinne; or if they did, that it was but a small one: whereas most certaine it is, that if they did not resist the passion, but gaue deliberate consent therevnto, that they sinned, though the consent continued neuer so small a time,

# MEMORIAL. 25

tyme. And if the thing to which they gaue consent, was any notable iniury to their neighbour, or fornication, or any other such weighty matter, then was that consent a mortal sin, & it importeth not that it continued but a little while, for that did not proceede from his owne vertue, but for that the fury of the passion was now ended. Others excuse themselves, laying the fault vpon the Diuell, saying: The diuel tempted me, & if was he that beguiled mee, & made me to sin. Others excuse themselves ascribing all the blam to their neighbours, that gaue them occasion of

B

fin.



## 26 THE LITTLE

sinning, laying thus: If I offended god, the reason was, because they asked me, and were so importune that I could not excuse my selfe; or it was because they first gaue mee disgracious & bad words, or offered me this iniury, & enforced me against my wil, to returne them the like speach againe, & to offer them the like measure. Others defend & excuse their sinne, far worse then the former, and that is by attributing the fault to God himselfe, saying. God hath giuen me such a nature, so wicked a complexion, & so prone to naughtines, that although I do what I can, and inforce my selfe neuer so much,

## MEMORIAL. 27

much , yet can I not auoide these sins , nor resist these tentations . All which is false & a great vntruth , for neither the diuel , nor any man , can cōpell one to sin , if freely & voluntarily of himselfe , he wil not sin : neither doth God euer giue ouer to bestow vpon man in this life , al that help which is necessary , and requisite , not to consent to sin , if man himself would take the benefit therof .

This so great a disorder in man , groweth of pryde , and a certaine presumption , by reason whereof , he esteemeth of himselfe , and would allso be esteemed of others , more then is lawful , and is afraid of that

confusion, & disgrace, which for his sinnes he deserneth. So saith *S Gregory* in these words: *Our hart filled with pryde, if it doth ought worthy of blame, that doth it conceale and hide & wold not openly confesse it, to haue any remedy thereof.* And this disorder, descendeth vnto vs by inheritance from Adam: for as from him, we inherit originall sinne, so likewise by way of inclination do we inherit the increase of sin, and that is to excuse the same. Adam sinned, and God very mercifully came vnto him, and demanded certayne questions, to the end that by acknowledging and confessing his fault, and  
accu-

MEMORIAL. 19.

accusing himselfe from his hart, hee might haue obtained pardon. But Adam defended his sinne and excused himself, laying all the fault vpon the woman : and the woman being asked, she likewise excused herself laying the blame vpon the Serpent, which was the Diuell : and as *S. Gregory* sayth, both of them were in a certayne manner willing, to lay all the sinne vpon God himselfe : for what was it else for Adam to say, the woman which thou gauest me, made me to sin, but to insinuat that God was the cause of his sin, in that he created the womā ? And for the woman to say :

B 3

The



30 THE LITTLE

The Serpent deceaued me,  
 what was it else, but to ascribe  
 the sin vnto God, as the cause  
 thereof, for that he placed the  
 serpent in Paradise? And thus  
 by excusing themselves in this  
 māner, they procured against  
 themselves, two great euils &  
 passing notable harmes. The  
 one was, that they did stop &  
 hinder the mercy of God, and  
 obtained not pardon of their  
 sinne, at that tyme: for this  
 was the very cause why God  
 demaunded of the Diuell no-  
 thing at all, because neither  
 would he pardon him, neither  
 was he capable of penance:  
 and of Adam and Eue did hee  
 aske certayne questions, for  
 that

# MEMORIAL. 31

that he was desirous that they should with sorrow, haue confessed their sins, and by their humble & simple confession, not excusing it, haue obtained full pardon at his hands. The second harme which they did, was, that by excusing themselves they increased their sin, and made it more grieuous then otherwise it was: wherof ensued, that albeit afterward through penance which they did, they were pardoned: yet had the pardon so great a punishment annexed, as was the destruction of the whole world, and their banishment for the space of nine hundred and odde yeares vpon earth, and

## 32 THE LITTLE

afterward imprisonment for the space of three or foure thousand yeares in that place of hell called Abrahams bosome, or *Limbus Patrum*. In the very same manner doth it fare with all the Children of Adam, that defende and excuse their sinnes: for by laying the fault vpon his creaturs, vpon aduersities & tentations, they doe in a certayne secret manner, attribute them to God himselte, who is the maker of all creatures, & the author of all the euils of punishment & affliction: & by these meanes, doe they increase and multiply their sin, and greatly stop and hinder the mercy of  
God,

God, who would pardon their offences. For so notheth S. Gregory in these words. *It is a common vice amongst men, to hide themselves for the committing of sin, and after the committing being asked, to deny it, and being conuicted thereof, to defend and excuse it, by which the sinne is increased.*

This so wicked a passion & disorder, we ought to overcome and mortify, by confessing al our sinnes plainly and clarely, with all the greatnes they haue, & to lay al the fault vpon our selues, confessing our selues to be the true & entire cause of them, & to attribute all that we doe vnto our  
B 5                      selues:



# 34 THE LITTLE

selues: for althogh true it be,  
 that the Diuels doe tempt vs,  
 & men perswade & prouoke  
 vs to wickednesse, yet is man  
 for al that alwaies free, and at  
 liberty, & hath sufficient help  
 from God to withstand tenta-  
 tions, & not to consent vnto  
 any sinne at all, and therefore  
 ought hee to accuse & blame  
 himselfe and not any creature  
 else whatsoeuer. Let him not  
 therefore say in his defence,  
 the Diuell did tempt me; nor  
 my neighbour gaue me occa-  
 sion, and made me to sinne:  
 but let him say from the bot-  
 tom of his heart, I am he that  
 did the sinne, and the faule  
 is wholly mine, because vo-  
 lunta-

luntarily, and of mine owne  
free will I gaue consent there-  
unto: & whereas it was in my  
power to haue shunned such  
dangers and occasions, which  
I ought to haue done, yet I did  
I not auoide them: and being  
able against the tentations of  
the enemy, to haue holpen &  
strengthened my selfe with  
prayer, penance, workes of  
mercy, spiritual talke, and rea-  
ding of good bookes: yet did  
I not for that purpose, vſe ey-  
ther theſe, or any other ſuch  
like meanes, which God did  
inspire into my ſoule, & ther-  
fore al the fault is mine owne,  
and all the cauſe of my harme  
remayneth in my ſelf: for theſe

saying of *S. Chrysostom* is most true, that none receaueth any hurt but from him self, because there is no other true harme or damage indeed, but that which sinne causeth, and that neuer can be, except a man doth willingly consent thereunto. And when a man confesseth his sinnes, with this kind of purity, let him haue great care that he doe not either pretend or desire to be accounted humble for so doing, or to be esteemed for a good penitent man, for this were to fly from one kinde of pride, and to fall into another: but let his principall intent be, to betaken for a sinner, and to be  
for

# MEMORIAL. 37

for his finnes confounded ,  
 reprehended, and to haue spi-  
 rituall phisicke giuen him , as  
 to a sinner . Of which mind  
 of his , it will be a good argu-  
 ment and testimony, if when  
 his ghostly Father doth blame  
 and rubuke him for his sinns ,  
 and treat him as a sinner ,  
 he take it patiently & well :  
 for if he accuse himself plain-  
 ly as a sinner, and yet will not  
 be delt withall nor reprehended  
 as a sinner , it is a signe  
 that he doth not confesse or  
 accuse himselfe sincerely from  
 his hart . This is the opinion  
 of S . Gregory whose wordes  
 be these : *True confession which  
 wee make of our sinnes , is tried  
 by*



by the reprehension which is giue  
vs, for those sinnes which we con-  
fesse: for if being rebuked for the  
we defend the with pride, certaine  
it is, that we confessed the not sin-  
cerely for it is the sin of pride, not  
willingly to heare that at the  
mouth of another which a man  
doth willingly confesse of himself.  
And if when we cōfesse our selues  
to be sinners, we did likewise with  
true humility acknowledge our  
selues for such whē we are blamed  
or rebuked for our sinnes, neuer  
would we deny or defend them.  
Thus writeth S. Gregory: out of  
whose words we learne what  
the intent of a true penitent  
ought to be in confessing his  
sins simply and plainely, and  
without:

MEMORIAL. 39

without excusing them, and that is, not to be accounted iust, or to be reuerenced for such a one, but to be confounded, humbled, and reprehended, as a sinfull man.

So great is the vertue of this sincere and humble confession, that by meanes thereof a sinner doth penetrate the heauens, is presented in the sight of God, and doth prouoke his infinit mercy to pardon and discharge him, from all paine due to his sinnes, & to bestow vpon him great rewards: for as poore beggers the more they doe lay open their pouerty, and shew their soares, to men of mercy and com-

compassion, so much the more they moue their pittie, and receaue from them great almes: euen so when sinfull men doe discover the misery of their sinnes, and more amplify and stand vpon them, & the more they do blame and accuse themselves for committing them: so much the more do they incline the clemency of Almighty God, to take compassion and pittie vpon them, and to bestow vpon them in greater abundance, the most precious giftes, of his diuine grace. Very well was Dauid acquainted with this quality of God, when he spake thus vnto him: *Pardon my sinne O Lord,*

MEMORIAL. 41

*Lord, for it is great. He excused not his sinne, nor made it lesse, but did plainly confesse it, and that with all the grievousnesse thereof, the more to moue the pittie of God to pardon and forgiue him. An excellent witnesse also is that good thiefe, who hanging vpon the Crosse confessed his finnes, and not with excuses laid the fault vpon others, but accused and blamed himselfe, acknowledging himself worthy of all shame and punishment for them, as himselfe plainly declared, speking thus to the other thiefe: *We do iustly suffer this punishment, for our owne wicked life doth deserue it.**

And



## 42 THE LITTLE

And for this humble and contrite confession of his, he receaued straight waies pardon for his sinnes, and was in a moment absolued from all punishment both eternall and temporall, and had also that day bestowed vpon him the possession and ioyes of the Kingdome of heauen. These be the wonderfull effects, which a pure confession void of all excuses, and which proceedeth from a contrite and humble hart worketh in the sight of God: for it doth forthwith pacify God, take away his anger and wrath, which he had conceaued against the sinner, reuoketh all his threatenings

## MEMORIAL. 43

nings of euerlasting tormētts  
pronounced against him, and  
turneth them into mercy, in-  
to the gifts of grace, and eter-  
nall glory. Wherefore great  
reason we haue to craue of  
God, praying thus with Da-  
uid : *Suffer not my hart O Lord,  
to consent vnto such malicious &  
proude words, that I do excuse  
and defend my sinnes.*

## CHAP.

## CHAP. III.

*Of the disorder in confessing such sins as be certain, with doubtfull words, and which doe not signify any sinne at all.*

**A**N other disorder which vsually springeth vp also from the same roote, and into which those also doe fall, that come often to the Sacrament of Pennance, is for a man to confesse his sins with such kind of words, as signify not any fault, nor import any sin at all, as for example, to say: I confesse my selfe of these my faultes and imperfections,

# MEMORIAL. 45

tions. I accuse my selfe, that  
 I haue had little patience, little  
 humility, and small charity.  
 I accuse my selfe, that I haue  
 not had more attention at my  
 prayers, nor more care in kee-  
 ping of my tongue, and mine  
 eyes, and that I haue not more  
 speedily dipatched out of my  
 hart, vaine and dishonest  
 thoughts. I accuse my selfe,  
 that I did not such a worke,  
 with all that humility, & cha-  
 rity, which I might haue  
 done. I accuse my selfe, if I  
 haue spoken any idle word or  
 backbited any. These and o-  
 ther such like wordes, do  
 not certainly signify any  
 fault of sinne at all, because a  
 fault



# 46 THE LITTLE

fault & sinne is then committed, when a man doth not that to which he is bound, and faileth in that, which he ought to do, and which is of necessity and precept: but as for all these former wordes, & such like, one may truly say them, who hath done all that which in rigour he was bound vnto, albeit he hath not done al that which he might haue done, nor yet al that which was better and of more pefection; because God doth not binde a man in al cases vnder paine of mortal sin, no nor venial neither, to do all that which he might do, nor yet all that which he may, and is able to do,

MEMORIAL. 47

doe, neither all that which is the better, and of most perfection: and therefore if any should confesse himselfe, not vsing any other manner of wordes then the former, he could not be absolved, because he confessed not plainly any sinne at all.

When one that goeth often to confession, & amongst other sins, some he hath that be doubtful: cōcerning which he is not certaine, whether he gaue any consent or no, or was carelesse in making resistance: in this case to confesse thē with such kind of words as before are set downe, is not inconuenient, nor any  
cause

48 THE LITTLE

cause why for so doing one should be blamed, seeing other finnes, whereof he is certaine he confesse them plainly and distinctly. And if it fall so out, that since his last confession, he cannot call to minde any new sins, then may he confesse some of his life past, to the end that he may haue absolution, which without specifying of some sinne cannot be giuen.

But concerning sins that be certaine, and which the penitent knoweth full wel that he hath committed, he must not vse any such manner of words, but confesse them in plaine and expresse tearmes, and

# MEMORIAL. 49

& such as do clearly set down the sinne, saying thus: I accuse my selfe, that I haue byne negligent in keeping of my hart: that I haue not repelled vaine thoughtes, with such care as I ought to haue done: that in the tyme of prayer, I haue not had that attention, and deuotion, which I was bound to haue had: that I haue not resisted the motions of anger, of pryde, of enuy, with such patience, humility, & charity, as I ought to haue done; that I haue byn cold in doing good works, & some which I ought to haue don, I haue vpon floath omitted: and in other some which I haue done, I haue not

C

had



50 THE LITTLE  
had that vertuous end, and in-  
tent which I ought to haue  
had, in seeking the glory  
of God in them, but rather my  
self, being moued to do the for  
mine owne pleasure and incli-  
nation, or seeking in the mine  
owne honour and content: I  
haue with superfluous appetite  
sought for commodities and  
pleasure of my body, in meate,  
drinke, apparel, rest and other  
recreations, not obseruing in  
all these things, that moderatiō  
to which I was bound: Of ad-  
uersity, punishment, or any  
disgrace, I haue byn too much  
griued and sad, and not con-  
formed my self so much to the  
will of God as I ought. Of  
such

## MEMORIAL. 51

such things as haue fallen out according to mine own wil & desire, & for that they brought me honour, and procured me cōmendation, or were things of delight and pleasure, I haue reioyced in some of them vainely, and not referred them as I ought, to the glory of God, and the good of mine owne soule: My tongue I haue not kept so carefully as I ought, & without any necessity or profit of soules haue I spoken wordes in mine owne prayse: curious questions haue I demanded, and idle words haue I vttered.

These & such like, be the ordinary veniall sins, into which

C 2

Gods

## 52 THE LITTLE

Gods seruantes that liue with care, & in the feare of God, do oftentimes in a weeke, yea & in one day fall into ( for those which lead their life without any such care, doe commit others more grieuous ) & with such words as these that signify and import sinne, ought they to confesse them: and a true desire to make their confession as is requisite, humility of heart, griefe and sorrow for sinne, and that light which dayly they gaine in the spirituall profit of their soule, will clearely lay open before their eyes, these and other such like finnes of their hartes, and will teach them fit wordes to  
ex-

# MEMORIAL. 53

expresse them, and make them  
 appeare with al their deformi-  
 ty as is conuenient: because in  
 Sacramental confession the pe-  
 nitent is witnesse against him-  
 selfe, and the witnesse being  
 lawfully demaunded, is bound  
 to tell all the trueth, and that  
 in cleare & plaine words: He  
 is likewise an aduocate for  
 God against himself: & the of-  
 fice of an aduocat is, to allead-  
 ge al the reason & iustice that  
 can be sayd for his owne side,  
 and plainely and truely to o-  
 pen al the iniustice & litle rea-  
 son that is on the cōtrary part.  
 And when a man doth so in  
 confession, then doth he giue  
 true euidence against him-  
 selfe,



# 54 THE LITTLE

selfe, discovering and laying  
 open all the grievousnesse of  
 his sinnes : and he that doth  
 behaue himself like a wise ad-  
 uocate in Gods cause against  
 himself, alleadging al such rea-  
 sons as hee hath to loue and  
 obey God; and confesse with  
 true sorrow of hart, all his  
 great ingratitude, and malice,  
 with al such considerations &  
 circumstances as do increase  
 them, which is but reason :  
 then doth God of his infinite  
 goodnes and piety take vpon  
 him mans cause, maketh him-  
 self his aduocate & patron, &  
 giueth sentence in his fauour,  
 pronouncing him absolved &  
 free from all his sinnes, from  
 euer-

MEMORIAL. 55

everlasting paine and confusion, yea & sometymes from the temporal paine also which for them he deserued. And thus in this Court & iudgment, there passeth a wonderfull strange secret; to wit, that if a sinner hideth his sins, & doth not declare & opē them as he ought, they do remaine and be reserved to be layd open and punished at the day of iudgment, and himself to bee confounded before that terrible tribunal, & to be punished for them in the sight of heauen and earth: and if on the contrary a man doth now confesse and declare them with sorrow of hart, then doth God

# 56 THE LITTLE

hide & couer the in such sort  
that they shall neuer bee seene  
more either of God or men for  
any punishment or confusion  
to such a penitent sinner. For  
hee that confesseth his sinnes  
in this manner, God doth so  
deale with him as though he  
had neuer sinned, & doth giue  
him so good a countenance,  
loue him so entirely, so bounti-  
fully and so liberally, bestow  
vpon him the treasures of his  
grace & glory, as though hee  
had neuer offended him in his  
whole life. O with what great  
reason did Dauid say, *Blessed  
are they, whose iniquities are par-  
doned, & whose sins are couered.*  
They are tearmed couered, be-  
cause

# MEMORIAL. 37

cause now they are not; & albeit sometyme they were, yet now shall they neuer more be seene to the hurt, or damage of the penitent sinner.

## CHAP. IV.

*Of the disorder in confessing of veniall sinnes, without hauing for them any grieve or purpose of amendment.*

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**S**OME seruants of God there be, which doe often confesse themselves, & vtterly forsake all mortall sinne, and yet sometyme commit this fault, that is, to confesse their venial sinnes, and yet to leaue their



passions quick, & liuely, bearing still a loue and affection vnto them: neither doe they ouercome them, or by cōtrary actes mortify them with true contrition of hart, and so they confesse, & accuse themselves of such venial sins, only vpon a custome, without any penance at al, that is not hauing any true sorrow or griefe for them, or else without a firm purpose any more to commit them. In this manner do they confesse, idle words, voluntary distractions, curiosity in looking, & the rest of the senses, their excesse in eating, drinking sleeping, laughing, their idlenes & losse of tyme,  
and.

# MEMORIAL. 39

and superfluous cherishing of  
 themselves, their merry lies,  
 light detractions, & their ne-  
 gligence and remisnesse in the  
 tyme of prayer, and Masse. Of  
 these & other such like sins do  
 they make their confession,  
 without euer feeling before  
 hand any grief for thē in their  
 hart, and without hauing any  
 determination verily neuer to  
 commit them againe. And this  
 carelesnesse is very hurtfull  
 for two reasons: the one is, be-  
 cause although a man do con-  
 fesse these sins, yet if he do not  
 truely resolute neuer to do thē  
 againe, obtaineth not any for-  
 giuenesse for them at Gods  
 hands, and so they remaine

still alieue in the soule, and doe weaken and dispose it to fall into other sinnes which be far greater. Another reason is, becaule confessing his sinnes in this manner, he addeth a new fault to the former: because such a confession as touching those sinnes, is faygned and false: for though in words he doth accuse himselfe of them, yet doth he not detest and abhorre them, nor resolve in his hart to auoide them. And therefore if he should confesse all his veniall sins in that manner, that is, without a true purpose to forsake any of the, then were the confession altogether counterfeit &  
of

# MEMORIAL. 61

of no valew : & for this cause  
 necessary it is , as holy men  
 do teach , that when Gods ser-  
 uants do confesse veniall sins,  
 they should thinke well vpon  
 them, and before hand be so-  
 ry for them in their hart , as  
 being offences against God ,  
 and verily determine with a  
 purpose neuer to commit the  
 any more : and if many times  
 they fall into them againe ,  
 many times likewise let them  
 rise againe , renewing their  
 former purpose : and if so of-  
 ten as they come to confessi-  
 on they commit afterward the  
 same finnes , so often likewise  
 let them haue the same resolu-  
 tion , and not to be dismayed  
 or



or discouraged : but let them humble themselves , and give God thanks who alwaies is ready , whensoever they turn vnto him , to receiue them , and to pardon their offences. Neither let them thinke , that such confessions be altogether vnprofitable , because they fall againe into their former sins , but that they be very good & of much profit , because so often as they come vnto confession with the same purpose of amendment of their life , Gods grace , ( as before hath bin said ) and the vertues & gifts of the holy Ghost , be encreased in them , and they do obtaine force & strength to perse-

serue

# MEMORIAL. 63

serue themselves, and not to fall into other sins which be greater: & a great part also of that harme is hindred which they had done, had they not before confessed such veniall sins and obtained pardon for them. And if the servant of God when he goeth to confession, through his frailty feeleth not in himselfe any determinate purpose, to fly all veniall sins, which he confesseth; at least let him haue a full resolution to auoid some of the greatest, and which do most harme to his soule: and if his frailty be so great, that of such veniall sins as he hath committed since his last confession,

## 64 THE LITTLE

on, because they be ordinary, he findeth difficulty & paine to auoid them, let him at least accuse himselfe of some sinne, which in former time he hath confessed, and that which he hath a true purpose by Gods grace verily to auoide: because if he do so, then shall his confession be lawfull, and accompanied with the fruit of Gods grace: for the obtayning wherof, requisit it is, that our confession be, of such sins as a man doth abhorre. The reason why one should with such a disposition confesse veniall sinnes is, because when a man committeth any veniall sinne, the soule is disordinately turned  
ned

# MEMORIAL. 65

ned to the loue of the creature, louing more his owne delight, then to please & contentent God ; and desiring more to satisfy his owne will, then the wil of God : and therefore for the taking away of the same disorder from the soule, & that it may returne againe to his former rightnesse, necessary it is, that a man should do some inward act contrary to that former sinne, which before he did : as for example, to haue true griefe and sorrow for sinne, or a resolute purpose to commit it no more, or else, some other such act equiualent to these : as some act of the loue  
of



66 THE LITTLE  
of God, or deuotion, or relig-  
nation, so contrary to venial  
finnes committed, that if he  
did then remember them, he  
would abhor and auoid them  
quickly: and when he confes-  
seth all his veniall finnes with  
such a due disposition, cer-  
taine it is, that he obtayneth  
pardon and remission of them  
all.

A great benefit of God  
certaine it is, that he hath of  
his infinite goodnesse besto-  
wed vpon man so effectuali &  
sweet a remedy. And for as  
much as most true it is, that  
the soule cannot enter into  
heauen with one only veniall  
sinne, but that of necessity it  
must

## MEMORIAL. 67

must before hand be purified  
and purged from all, either in  
this life, or else in the next:  
great reason there is, that we  
should make our commodity  
of this diuine remedy, & that  
when we meane to confesse  
such veniall sinnes as we haue  
committed in those eight or  
fifteene daies, since we were  
last at that Sacrament; we  
should first seriously thinke of  
them in our conscience, and  
consider how they be offen-  
sive to God; and contrary to  
his diuine wil, doe very much  
hurt our soules, & hinder vs  
from receauing of most hea-  
uenly gifts at the hands of his  
diuine Maiesty; and that we  
were

# 88 THE LITTLE

were bound rather to haue  
suffered any temporal punish-  
ment, or losse, then euer to  
haue consented to commit  
them: and let vs be griued &  
ashamed that euer we did the,  
and determine in our harts,  
neuer to commit them again:  
and hauing thus disposed and  
prepared our selues, let vs con-  
fesse them; and albeit in con-  
fession we tell not all, but the  
greatest, and those which  
cause most shame, yet let the  
griefe and sorrow for hauing  
committed them, and the pur-  
pose of not committing them  
again comprehend and in-  
clude all. And by these means  
shall we deliuer our selues frō  
the

MEMORIAL. 69

the terrible fire of Purgatory ,  
and shall obtaine more plenty  
of Gods grace , and greater  
purity of conscience; & when  
we leaue this mortall life , we  
shall the sooner passe to the  
ioyes of heauen : for as *Saint  
John* saith , *Nothing that is de-  
fled shall enter into that holy  
Citty .*

CHAP.



*Of a certaine carelesnesse, which  
usually is found amongst such  
as bee desirous to serue God,  
concerning the examination  
of their conscience before Con-  
fession. and the great harmes  
which doe follow thereof.*

---

**A**Lthough cōmonly such  
as feare God, and often  
go to confession, do in such  
sort examin their conscience,  
that their confession is sound,  
and good, and so not bound to  
make their confession againe:  
yet in some such, not seldome,  
a great carelesnesse is found,  
which

## MEMORIAL. 71

which doth much hinder the notable fruit of confession .

This negligence is , concerning the examination of their conscience before they goe to confession, doing it very lightly , and superficially, without entering well into the inward part of their soule , and without any great care to search out many secret sinnes, which they haue committed: amongst which althogh some be great, yea and some of them mortall ; yet because the malice of them is more hidden , or else haue some shew of vertue , they knowe them not , nor make them any part of their confession. Wherefore for the better

better vnderstanding of this be  
point, which is very impor- a  
tant, we haue to consider, that to  
as some finnes proceede of th  
malice, which be those that k  
man knoweth to be finnes, & to  
doth them of purpose, not ha  
uing any great passion to pro  
voke him thereunto: so there  
be other finnes, which come  
of infirmity, such as those be  
which a man knoweth to bee  
sins, yet he doth them, be-  
cause some passion or great  
tentatiō prouoketh him ther-  
unto: so likewise there be o-  
ther finnes, which proceede  
of ignorance, as those be,  
which a man through his own  
negligence knoweth not to  
be

be any finnes. True it is, when  
 a man doth what lieth in him,  
 to vnderstand the trueth of  
 that which hee is bound to  
 knowe, and yet cannot come  
 to the knowledge thereof, be-  
 cause he cannot find any that  
 is able to teach him; then is he  
 very wel excused from al dan-  
 ger of sin: but whē a man doth  
 not what for his part he ought  
 to doe, to know the truth, as  
 because he doth not inquire  
 of such as hee should, nor aske  
 counsel of whom hee ought,  
 neither vseth he other such  
 meanes as be necessary, that  
 God may giue him light, and  
 that good and learned men  
 may informe him what hee is

D bound



# 74 THE LITTLE

bound to doe, such a man as this, doing that thing which he knoweth not to be a sin, is is not through his ignorance excused: and therefore if that which he doth bee against any precept that bindeth to mortall sinne, then shall that sin of his be mortall: and if it be against a precept which bindeth onely to a venial sin, then shall the sinne likewise be but veniall, although not so grievous as if it were done of malice, or were known before hand. The truth of this doctrine is set down by the Church, in a certaine decree which is taken out of *S. Augustine*: these be his wordes.

*Not*

# MEMORIAL. 75

Not all they who be ignorant of the euill they doe, be free from sin, and paine due to the same; but such as haue none to instruct and tell them, may well be excused: but those that may bee taught the trueth, and yet will not take any paines to learne it, are not excused: neither be they free from sin, nor the punishment which for that they deserue

Out of this ground, to wit, that some ignorance is culpable, as that which proceedeth of carelesnesse & negligence, which excuseth not from sin, it followeth, that there be many Christians, which fall into diuers great sins, which through their own negligēce,

they neither know, nor vnderstand to be any finnes, and therefore do they not confesse them: and some remaine so secure, that they thinke themselves most assuredly to walke in the path of vertue, and the very right way to heauē, whē as in very truth they wander from true vertue, and trauaile in the path of euerlasting damnation: for which cause the wise man sayth: *There is a way which seemeth iust and straight, & in the end it leadeth to death.* As though he sayd: There be certayne kinds of liuing among men which seeme iust, and there be actions and customes, affaires and dealinges, which

MEMORIAL. 77

which seeme good , and yet be not so in the sight of God , but haue sins in them , which carry men to eternall damnation : what kind of sins these be , and how this euill is to be holpen , shall straight waies be declared.

CHAP. VI.

*Of some sins of ignorance, which a man knoweth not , nor confesseth : to wit , to be carelesse to know wherunto in particuler he is bound : and to omit the workes of iustice and charity.*

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**T**O the end , that this so great an euill may the better

D 3



78 THE LITTLE

better be known, & a remedy therof found out, it shal be very profitable to set downe in this place, some of these secret sins, which in many cases by reason of the weight of the matter, be mortall, & be commonly committed through ignorance: and I will speake only of those which be most vsuall, for by them the rest may bee easily gathered, and found out. Of these finnes, some bee more sensible and external, and more easily to bee knowne, if a man would bee diligent to note them; others be more subtile, internal, and harder to be found out. Of the first kind, be these:  
Negli-

Negligence for a man not to know, and performe such particular bandes as his estate or office requireth. Diuers men haue diuers states, and particular offices. Some be Lords ouer subiects, others be Gouernours, others Iudges, others Bayliffes, others Counsellers, others Scriueners, others Marchants: some haue the state of Prelates, others be Priestes, others religious man, others married. These states and offices, besides such bands & precepts as they haue common all Christians, other particular they haue also of great waight, commanded either by the law of God, or by the

80 THE LITTLE

law and ordinance of man; & these, are they bound both to knowe, and also to performe, and yet many do notably faile herein, not hauing any care to enter into the consideration of this point. To this kind of carelesnesse another is reduced, which many likewise do not consider: and it is for Parents and Maisters, not to instruct their children, and seruants, in the Catholike faith, and other necessary thinges to saluation; not to be carefull also that they heare Masse, keep the fasting daies, and say their prayers: not to keep them from wicked plaies, and pastimes, from gadding abroad

## MEMORIAL. 81

broad in the night time, from the wicked custome of vaine swearing, from eating of white meate vpon daies prohibited, not to keepe them from occasions of sinning, not to bestow their childre in due time in some good and vertuous state of life: or to bestow the against their owne willes or minds: not to pay in due time seruants & iourney men their wages: nor to performe such promises as they made them. By these kindes of omissions, oftentimes mortall sinnes are committed, which be not marked or thought vpon. In the number of these sinnes, is also the careles custom of swearing.

D<sub>5</sub> ring,



# 81 THE LITTLE

ring, By my life, By my health, So God saue me, or, As God shall help me, with other such like oathes; men swearing somtimes thus, & threatening that they wil doe this or that, yet without any intent to performe them: & at some other times affirming doubtful things for certain, & again at other times, to swear without thinking whether it be true or false; which sinne although it be periury, and of his own nature mortall, yet many that make profession of vertue do litle consider it. To sweare also to do something which may notably redound to the profit of their neighbours:

## MEMORIAL. 83

bour : or to sweare to execute such an office faithfully, or to obserue the rules therof : likewise to sweare not to receiue any giftes in such an office, nor any stipend more then is taxed and set downe, and afterward to doe contrary to their oathes; and yet doing so, many do not thinke that they haue committed any mortall sinne in forswearing themselves : and therefore doe not accuse themselves of any such sinne in confession.

One of these sinnes likewise which haue their malice hidden, is, to flatter Princes, Prelates, and Great men, commending or allowing of such

D. 6 things

# 84 THE LITTLE

things as they haue done wickedly, and to excuse their inuentiōs which serue to maintaine pryde and gluttony. To fauour also their friends, and to speake and labour for them that they may obtaine such offices or dignities whether secular or Ecclesiastical, wherof they be not worthy, because they haue not those partes which the law of God & man do require: and to take money or other thinges equiualent for offices, which should be giuen freely: or to doe other things of fauour, which of iustice, and by reason of their office they are bound to doe. To omit the doing of works  
of

## MEMORIAL. 87

of charity and mercy, whether spirituall or corporall, in such cases, as the law of God doth bind vs thereunto, and to spend in play, vaine appa-  
rell, iewelles, banquets not necessary, and in other superfluous thinges, that wealth which God gaue vs to bestow in workes of charity. Not to hinder mens sinns when conveniently we may, by correcting them, or denouncing them to their superiours, or else by our doctrine, counsell or almes: especially when they that omit these thinges be great persons, as Lordes, Iustices of peace, Iudges, or Prelates, who not only of charity  
but



but also of iustice, are bound to correct, punish, and let what they may, the sinnes of such as liue vnder their iurisdiction. Of these sins likewise they be, which although very grosse, yet to many their malice and greatnesse is secret & hidden: as much Iniustice, which is committed in not paying our debts in due time, and detayning them vniustly against the will of those that should haue them, whether the debts be old or new. To make collusions, and monopolies; that is, for one man or place to ingrosse thinges, that none may sell or gaine but he: likewise for many sellers to agree

gree together to the iniury of the buyers; and many buyers, to the damage of the sellers. To shew partiality in diuision of common benefites, or taxing of tributes or subsidies, or in stopping and aresting of goods, charging some, & exempting of others, and that for fauour and friendship. To gaine by play, or to buy things of other mens children, or such persons as cannot sell, or do them away. Not to performe faithfully & so soone as may be, the willes and testaments of others. Not to administer honestly, and according to conscience, the goods of Wardes and other children during

## 88 THE LITTLE

during their nonage, they being their Gardians, and having the charge of their education. To maintaine vniust futes : and in doubtfull cases, not to vse first diligence to know whether they be iust or no, by searching out that sincerely and with a desire to be assured thereof, and that of such as can informe them truly; and all this, not to doe iniury or hurt to any.

CHAP.

## CHAP. VII.

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*Of diuers kindes of wicked superstitions, not knowne to many: and sometimes not confessed through culpable ignorance.*

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**A**Mongest other great sins whose malice are not of many so well perceiued, diuers kindes of superstitions are numbred: as to be desirous to know by superstitious meanes, things past; as thefts, robberies, and other secret sinnes or thoughts of the hart: or to be willingly to know future thinges, and those not naturall,



naturall, but such as depend  
vpon our owne free will, or  
thinges casuall; for the effe-  
cting of which, the action of  
mans will must concurre: as  
marriages; getting or loosing  
of goodes; whether such a  
man will come, or such a blef-  
sing or curse shall light vpon  
such a one or no; whether he  
that goeth on such a side of  
the street, shall be flaine, or  
hurt with a stone; whether he  
that goeth ouer such a riuer,  
shall be drowned; and such o-  
ther like thinges, which God  
only doth know: for a man  
to be desirous to know such  
thinges as these, either by the  
starres of heauen, or by the  
lines

MEMORIAL. 91

lines or signes of a mans hād ,  
or by dreames , lottes , or the  
chattering or singing of birds ,  
or by the motions of a mans  
body , or by other such like  
meanes , cannot be excused  
from superstition . To be wil-  
ling likewise for the recouery  
of some infirmity , or to get a  
remedy for some malady , to  
say such kind of words , or to  
make such signes , or to carry  
such a writing about them ,  
and by such other like things ,  
which haue not any such na-  
turall force to worke any such  
thing , nor be ordayned of God  
for the producing of any such  
effects . Likewise to vse holy  
things , and to put all the ver-  
tue

true and efficacy of them in circumstances, or in ceremonies, which be indifferent, or vaine: as to obtain some temporall commodity at Gods hands; to determine that so many praiers and words are to be said and none other: & that they must be said iust so many times, & not one more or lesse, and vpon such daies and no other, or with so many candles, and of such a fashion and colour, and other like things: which being such as it little skilleth whether they be done in that manner or no, yet therein doe they put the efficacy and effect of their prayer, and not in the deuotion

**MEMORIAL. 93**

tion & fervour of spirit, with which the prayers be said, nor in Gods providence who disposeth of all humane things, as best serveth for his glory, & the good of our soules. Into these and other such like superstitions, many persons doe fall through culpable ignorance, thinking that in them, there is no sinne at all, or else but small and veniall, whereas in very truth the sin is very great, and very much & severely reprehended in the scripture; & also by holy men and ecclesiasticall Canons vnterly condemned, as those thinges, in which a secret covenant is made with the Diuell,



94 THE LITTLE  
uell, and in which he interme-  
dleth to beguile christians.

And not long since *Sixtus Quintus* by his publike letters, hath condemned all such vain artes, and vpon great paine forbidden them: These be his wordes: *Besides that art which intreateth of future effects, proceeding of natural causes, & other arts which professe to tell future and casuall thinges, be guilefull and vaine, and subiect to the pernicious deceites of the Diuell, who by them doe greatly thrust themselves in. And therefore Astrologers & Mathematicians, who professe the vaine knowledge of the Starrs, and the generation and birth of men, & doe presume*

to know, iudge, and affirme, of that estate and condition of life, which men shall haue, as what honours shall befall them, what riches, what childrē, what health, what death, what iorneyes, what quarrelles, what imprisonments, & other such prosperous and aduerse chaunces, doe offend God grienously, and are themselves deceaued, and so deceaue others.

And in like manner all others who by other like artes, are desirous to know thinges that shall happen and be secret, as by signes in the hand, in the water, in the aire, in the fire, or in beastes, or by lottes, or such other tokens, be vaine men, curious, wicked, and without religion: and those  
men

men and women which seeke to know such like thinges of them, or or beleue them, do offend against their baptisme, and against the Christian faith. And he addeth besides, that he doth not only forbid these artes, and command that such as vse them shou'd be punished, when they affirme & assure men, that these, or these things shall fall out, but also when they say the same, though certainly they doe not affirme it. All these be the wordes of Pope Sixtus, in his said constitution: wherein also he cōmandeth all Prelats, and Inquisitors, to proceed against such persons very seuerely, & forbiddeth all bookes that in-

treats

## MEMORIAL. 97

treate of any such artes. And whereas he sayth, that those which enquire, and would know such things, or doe beleue them, that they doe offend against their baptisme, and the Catholike faith: his meaning is, that they offend against that which they professed in their baptisme, and against that which the catholicke sayth doth teach, which is to fly and detest al such pactes and couenants, whether open or secret, as the Diuell by any meanes hath any thing to doe in.

E CHAP.



## C H A P. VIII.

*Of sinnes committed by playing  
and gaming, and beholding of  
vaine & hurtful sightes, into  
which many do fall through  
culpable ignorance.*

**A** Mongst the former sins,  
may be placed playing  
at Cardes, Tables, Dice, and  
other like games, which con-  
sist in fortune. For whereas  
playing of his owne nature,  
that is, considered alone with-  
out any other circumstance,  
is not any sinne, and accom-  
panied with good and honest  
cir-

MEMORIAL. 99

circumstances, in some persons is lawfull: as when one wearied about honest businesse, doth now & then play a little at some lawfull game, only to refreshe his spirittes, and to returne more liuely to his vertuous labours, no ill example or scandal following thereof, nor any other inconvenience or disordinate end. Hereof it commeth, that although playing and gaming in such manner as they are vsed, be very great finnes; yet seeme they to be little, so that such as be resolved not to commit any mortall sin, doe play very freely, and falling by meanes thereof into many

great finnes , & some of them mortall , yet they know them not , nor take them for any such . For first of all , tyme , which is the gift of God , and that very pretious , graunted freely to man , to the end he should bestow him selfe in vertuous works , by which he may gaine & merit the ioyes of heauen , the end for which he was created ; that doth he spend and wast against the will of God in play & wicked gaming , and in them doth hee cast away not a litle tyme , but many houres , many nightes , and dayes . And that tyme which is spent in this vaine & godlesse exercise , is also taken away ,

# MEMORIAL. 101

away (as by and by shall be handled) from prayer, wherof hee hath great need, thereby to preferue himselfe in the seruice of God: for hee that is giuen to playing, is neyther at that tyme, nor yet before, or after, in any good disposition to pray, because that hath robbed and possessed his hart. This tyme likewise is taken frō much other honest busines to which he is bound of charity, or else of iustice, aswell for the profit of his owne soule, as to performe those things which belong to his charge, cōformable to his estate or office: & therfore by playing he doth iniury to many.



Seeing also God hath ordained, that such mony as is necessary for the maintenance of man, and his family, or for other good vses, should be gained with the labour of his hands, or by his learning, or else by lawfull bargaines and couenantes, profitable to the common wealth, according to that which God sayd to the first man, *In the sweate of thy face, shalt thou eat thy bread:* Which in a certayne manner doth belong to all those who maintaine themselves by any honest trauaile: hee that followeth gaming, doth contrary to this ordinance of God, seeing he would get mony by  
a vaine

a vaine and vicked meanes,  
by a thinge of hazzard and  
chance, and as they say, not  
otherwise, but because it fell  
out that he had such cardes, or  
such a chance at the dice. For  
which cause the gaine of play  
is called of learned men a fil-  
thy gaine, because it is gotten  
by a wicked meanes. And as  
for them who get that wher-  
of they liue, by honest tra-  
uaile, the diuine Scripture  
sayth: *Because thou shalt eate  
of the labour of thy hands, blessed  
shalt thou be, and well shall it goe  
with thee.* So on the contrary,  
of them which purchase their  
wealth and gather mony to-  
geather by naughty and wic-

ked meanes it sayth, *The treasures of wickednesse shall not profit him that hath them.* Those goodes are called *treasures of wickednes*, which are gotten vniustly, or by meanes of any other vice or sinne, as is that which is gotten by play, whe a man doth vse it to the end to get mony. This mony is to him that hath it, not only without profit, but also to his great losse: for besides the harme which it doth to his soule, it will also consume & vanish away as salt doth in water. And for the sin of him that doth so get it, it will be the cause that the rest of his goodes will be lost or consumed, and that eyther

ther in his own, or else in the  
hands of his heires: for this is  
that punishment which God  
doth oftentimes inflict vpon  
those that by such vnlawfull  
meanes come vnto wealth:  
and no doubt can be made,  
but that this kind of play is  
vnlawful and naught, as both  
heathen Philosophers, and  
holy Doctors affirme, seeing  
God did neuer ordaine play-  
ing, for a meanes to gather  
wealth: but this was the in-  
vention of the Diuel, and the  
deuise of the malice of man:  
and therefore very great rea-  
son there is, to feare that in  
such persons the saying will  
be fulfilled, which is vttered



by the Prophet *Micheas*: *The treasures of iniquity* (quoth he) *are fire in the house of a wicked man*: because they will like vnto fire with ill successe consume both the man and his wealth.

Besides these former reasons which doe sufficiently shew the malice of play, others also there be more cleare and apparant to the eyes of all: because certaine it is, that he which vsually is giuen to play, is oftentimes eyther to himselfe, or to those with whom he playeth the cause of these sins: to wit, that some do play away those goodes and money, which they haue no  
author.

authority to dispose of; because eyther they be their Fathers, or their maisters, or because it is due to their creditors, or because it is necessary for the maintenāce of their house and family, or else because they haue borrowed it by fraudulent meanes, and of them, to whome in very truth they are neuer able to pay it againe.

They be the cause likewise of much vaine and false swearing, of much brawling, quarrelling and contention, and that when themselues or others be angred and fretted by play, that they doe then fall out, and badly entreate

their wiues , their Children,  
their seruants , yea and their  
owne Fathers : they also be  
the cause of Scandall and ill  
example to others: and finally  
they be the cause that such  
mony as should be giuen to  
the poore for the honour of  
Christ , is taken from them,  
lost in play , and bestowed in  
the seruice of the Diuell. And  
whereas it is a commande-  
ment of God , as holy Doctors  
do affirme : for a man to giue  
in almes , in common & great  
necessities , that which is su-  
perfluous for the maintenāce  
of his owne estate , which is,  
so much as remaineth after he  
hath performed al that which  
of

MEMORIAL. 109

of christian decency is requisite for one of his calling: & in the extreme necessity of others to giue that also which is necessary for his estate, that is, so much as remaineth after he hath provided for his own life, and the life of his friends: In these cases, in which the precept of giuing almes, doth binde vnder paine of mortall sinne, according to the doctrine of holy & learned men: these gamesters for all that do it not, but take it from the poore, to employ it vpon play. And as such persons do transgresse the law of God & nature, so in like manner doe they breake the canonick & ciuill



# 110 THE LITTLE

civill law, which vnder great penalties forbid playing at Cardes and Dice and such other games, as a thing pernicious to the commonwealth. For these reasons and causes so sure & certaine, who seeth not, that the vse of play, which to many seemeth but a small euill, is in very deede a great one, and the roote and fountaine of passing great sinnes.

One of these sinnes also it is to see comedies & playes, in which is concourse both of men and women, and where many wanton thinges are brought vpon the stage. To haunt likewise the daunsing schooles,

## MEMORIAL. III

ſchools, & to goe a masking:  
which things becauſe of their  
owne nature they be not mor-  
tall ſins, many make ſmall ac-  
count of, & doe not fly them,  
no not ſuch as haue a care to  
follow vertue: and yet certain  
it is, that in them be found the  
true occaſions of mortall  
finnes, which oftentimes do  
cauſe the weake to fall: and  
therefore neceſſary it is, that  
ſuch as deſire to ſaue their  
ſoules, ſhould craue of God,  
that he would open thire eyes,  
that they may ſee the deadly  
poyſon, which lurketh vnder  
the braue gold of worldly de-  
lightes, and the diuers ſhip-  
wrackes, which many ſoules  
doe

doe suffer in this sea, which seemeth so calme to the eies of the world. And if they perseuer with humility, crauing this diuine light, God wil giue it them, and they shall become maisters of this truth: and in the meane time, let them be content to learne, and giue credit to others, that haue had experience therein, and let them carefully fly such occasions and dangers, and mortify themselues in this point, as else where hath beene admonished: and let them craue pardon of God, for that they haue herein through ignorance offended, saying with *David, Remember not, O Lord,*

*the*

*the sinnes of my youth, nor my culpable ignorance, giuing me full pardon for them all.*

---

## CHAP. IX.

*Of other sinnes more secret, as pride of our owne proper iudgement and selfe Will, which many doe not know, nor confesse through culpable ignorance.*

**T**Hese examples before noted, which are committed through culpable ignorance, be of the most sensible, externall, and easy to be knowne. Other sinnes there be, more subtile, in vvard, & secret, into vvhich many that desire



114 THE LITTLE  
desire to serue God doe fall, &  
through their negligence doe  
not knowv them: & although  
alwaies they be not mortall  
finnes, yet oftentimes they  
be, and euer dangerous, and  
for such ought to be auoyded,  
Of these, one is a spirituall  
pride, by reason whereof a  
man inwardly in his hart doth  
esteeme of himselfe very dis-  
ordinatly: a presumption of  
his owne iudgement, and pro-  
per vnderstanding, by meanes  
whereof, what he doth iudge  
and thinke to be so, that doth  
he like and followv, and that  
more obstinatly then is either  
lawful or conuenient. A pride  
of his owne will, wherevwith  
he

MEMORIAL. 115  
e loueth his v will very disor-  
linatly, is enamoured there-  
of, and desirous that it should  
be effected in all thinges. A  
presumptuous and disordinat  
confidence of his own forces  
and ability. A rash curiosity  
concerning the works & iud-  
gements of God. A disordinat  
desire to be preferred before  
others. A wicked sadnesse of  
another mans good. A secret  
ambition, of honour and di-  
gnity. An indiscretion in pe-  
nance, fasting, watching, &  
other mortifications, which he  
doth, following his own iudg-  
ment, contrary to the mind of  
his ghostly father. A wicked  
desir of singularity, wherby he  
greatly

greatly desireth in outward appearance, to haue rare and singular thinges, that men may cast their eyes more vpon him, then vpon others, and haue in him what to admire and commend. These be the most secret and spirituall sins, by reason of which it falleth out sometime, that a man is fully and wholly possessed of them, and yet doth neither know them, nor confesseth the: for as theeues that breake into a house, to rob and spoile it, do first of all put out the light, because they would not be seene: euen so these sins entering into the soule, and possessing a great part thereof, do  
quench

quench out the light of grace  
and sound reason, and make  
it so blinde, that it can neither  
see nor know them. This is  
the opinion of all holy men,  
which venerable *Richard* doth  
excellently vvell note in these  
vvords: *VWho is able to know the  
pride of his owne hart, which  
hath so longe continued and en-  
creased there, if God doth not o-  
pen it? Who can vnderstand the  
secret rootes, and crafty cogita-  
tions therof, by which oftentimes  
priuily, and without beeing  
perceaued, it entreth into the  
hart: and robbeth that vertue  
which there it findeth? And gi-  
uing a reason why other kind  
of sins the greater they be the  
more*



# 118 THE LITTLE

more easily they be known,  
 & pride the greater it is, the  
 more secret it is, and hideth it  
 selfe, thus he writeth. *Whi-*  
*lest this vice of pride doth more*  
*increase and enlarge it selfe in the*  
*soule, and more possesse and rule*  
*it, so much the more doth it make*  
*it blinde: and for that cause so*  
*much the lesse doth it perceiue it,*  
*but although the soule which har-*  
*boureth secrete Pride doth not*  
*know it: yet God doth, who is vi-*  
*gilant inough, and doth pun-*  
*nish it, spoyling the soule of all his*  
*gifts, and leaving it destitute of*  
*his diuine grace. All this is out*  
*of venerable Richard: in which*  
*vords he doth vwith all other*  
*holy men affirme that there be*  
 secret

MEMORIAL. 119

secret sins in the soule vvhich  
a mā himselfe doth not know,  
and that among all other that  
which doth most lurke and  
hide it selfe is Pride.

And it is not a thing much  
to be meruailed at, that God  
doth vse this so fearefull a  
iudgement with sinners; as to  
suffer them to fall into those  
sins, which themselues know  
not, because God dealeth thus  
with such persons, as first cō-  
mitted those sinns which they  
know well inough what they  
were, and yet did not true  
pennance for them: & for pu-  
nishment of so bold & shame-  
lesse a behauiour, as wittingly  
and maliciously to haue com-  
mitted

mitted to grieuous finnes,  
God doth permit that the darts  
of his anger come vpon them  
which is the greatest punish-  
ment that he vseth in this life,  
so that voluntarily they fall  
into such finnes as through  
their owne negligence, they  
know not to be finnes, and  
being fallen into them, so to  
continue without doing for  
them any penance, and som-  
time to dye in the same. So  
saith *Saint Gregory*. It is a pu-  
nishment for sin committed, for a  
man to see, and know that good  
thing which he ought to doe, and  
yet through his weaknesse, not to  
put it in execution; and a greater  
punishment it is, and inflicted for  
some

some greater sinne. for a man not  
to see, nor know that which he is  
bound to do.

Of these secret sins, which  
are committed through igno-  
rance, and yet for all that be  
imputed by God, and seuerely  
by him punished, we haue  
many examples in holy Scri-  
pture. I will here only make  
mention of two, but those of  
the most notable, to giue  
more light to that which hath  
byne sayd. God commaunded  
King *Saul* to inuade the coun-  
trei of the *Amalacites*, and  
vtterly to destroye them, not  
leauing eyther man or beast  
aliue, because they did not  
shew mercy, but cruelty to-  
F wards



wards the *Israelites*, when they came out of *Ægypt*: *Saul* went, and conquered the countrey, slew men, & beastes as he was commanded: but yet he did spare the life of the King, called *Agag*, and some of the best cattell: and in this fact, hee neuer thought that he had committed any sinne at all: for to saue the Kings life, he did it vnder the title of piety: and some of the beastes he reserued, for outward shew of religion, to offer them in sacrifice to God: and therefore when the Prophet *Samuel* did reprehend him, for not hauing kept the commaundement of God,

he

he answered confidently, that he had done all that, which God had willed and appointed him. Albeit *Saul* sinned, because he should not haue interpreted the commandement of God, according to his own fancy, nor to haue done, expressly contrary to that which God gaue him in charge, cyther vpon any pretext of piety, or colour of religion: yet he thought that he had not committed any sinne therein, nay rather he supposed, that he had done very well: and so that which he reputed for no fault, God very iustly did impute vnto him for a grieuous sin, & did pu-

114 THE LITTLE

nish him most seuerely for the same, depriving him of his Kingdome, and casting him out of his fauour, & suffering him by a naughty death to end his dayes. *David* had a desire to number his people and to muster all the men of war in his Kingdome, and he put this his desire in execution. This was in him a great sinne both because it was very chargeable to the King, very troublesome to the people, without any necessity or iust cause and also because it was a kind of pride, and vaine ostentation, as *S Gregory* sayth: and to this may be also added, how it was against the law, which

which commanded, that whē vpon necessity the people were numbred, that euery one should offer a certayne quantity in almes, to be imployed about the vses of the tabernacle. This being so grieuous a sin, and for so many reasons contrary to the law of God, yet vwhen *David* did it, he thought it not any such, vntill afterward he saw the punishment thereof, to consume his people, by so pitifull a pestilence, that there were already dead thereof seauenty thousand persons: Then he perceaued what a great sinne he had committed, and did confesse it, saying. *I haue sinned*



*much in this fact, and have done foolishly.* And *David* fell into this sinne, because behoulding himself so potent in battaile, and to ouercome all his enemies, he suffered some presumption to enter into his hart: and for his sinne, and for the sinnes of the people, God did suffer him, to fall into such an ignorance, and blindness, that he knew not how great a sinne that was, which he then committed So that both *Saul*, and *David*, offended God, in doing these sinnes, not knowing how great the fault was vvhich then they did. In like manner, many fall into very grieuous sins, through

through culpable ignorance, as hath byn sayd, and some of them, as *Saul*, neuer come to know or confesse them, and so dy in their sins, and perish for euer. Others, as *David*, come to the knowledge thereof, and do purge them by true penance and contrition. To the end therefor that we may preserue our selues from falling into so great blindnesse as this is, and if we be already fallen, that we may come out of it, let vs now see, what remedies are for this purpose to be vsed, and put in practise.

## C H A P. X.

*Of a very profitable remedy, against the harme which cometh by secret sins, and that is, every day to examine our conscience: and the manner how this is to be done.*

**H**Aving now declared, how great an hindrance it is, to a good confession, lightly to examine our conscience, and the great harmes which from that negligence doe grow, and that is for a man to fall into those sinnes which he knoweth not: requi-

quisite it is likewise, to giue some instructions, how we may ouercome this carelesnes, and deliuer our selues from these so great harmes.

The first is, for a man willingly to take paines to enter with consideration into himselfe, and to search all the corners of his conscience, & craving light at Gods hands, that he may know himself, to stay therefore some space, pondering the motions, & desires of his own soule, and the works which from that doe spring: For to apply carefully, and with diligence, the heart troubled with such variety of tentations; to consider with qui-



## 130 THE LITTLE

et, the inward actions of the soule, and the outward of the body, is a thing of trauaile & paine, and therefore necessary it is, that a man should resolve himselfe to imbrace this labour, and to ouercome this difficulty. And to the end that a man may by vse make this examination vvel, and get a facility therein, let him not thinke it inough to examine his conscience once before he goeth to confession, but let him make it dayly. And for that purpose at night vwhen he goeth to bed, let him retire himselfe, into some Chamber, or secret place: and there let him call his soule to account

# MEMORIAL. 131

accoũt, how v it hath bestovv-  
 ed that day; and let him exa-  
 mine vvell all that he hath  
 thought, sayd, or done: and  
 such sins as he findeth himself  
 to haue fallen into; let him  
 purge vwith the teares of pen-  
 nance, for so did holy *Iob*, and  
 this vvas his meaning vwhen  
 he sayd: *I considered O Lord,*  
*With feare al my works, because I*  
*know, that thou wilt not leave a-*  
*ny sin unpunished,* as though he  
 had sayd: To preuēt thy iudg-  
 ment and punishment, I haue  
 iudged and punished my self:  
 and that euery day, and euery  
 hower: because the holy man  
 could not make this examina-  
 tion of all his vvorkes, had he

not vſed it very often . And King *Dauid* ſo employed about the affaires of his Kingdome, & ſo charged with buſineſſe of great vveight, vvas not for al that careleſſe herin, but did euery night recollect himſelfe , to make this examination of his conſcience, and to bewaile al the wickedneſſe which he had committed againſt the will of God . This doth he plainly declare, when he ſayth thus: *I haue laboured in ſorrow & ſighing for my ſins, and euery night haue I exerciſed my ſelfe, untill I haue waſhed my bed, with the abundance of teares, which mine eyes did poure forth.* And in another *Psalme* he ſaith:.

# MEMORIAL. 133

*saith: In the night time haue I exercised my self, meditating within my soule the mercies receiued of God, and the sins which I haue committed against him: & reprehending and accusing my selfe, I haue with sorrow washed my soule.*

This examination is to be made by deuiding it into five members or points. In the first, let him giue thanks vnto God, for benefites receaued; as for hauing created him of nothing according to his owne image, and for his glory; for hauing preserved him, redeemed him, and made him a Christian; and for hauing suffered and expected him to  
doe.



doe penance: and in particular, for that he hath that day giuen him life, strength, succour, and wholly deliuered him from many sins and dangers, into which through his owne weaknesse, and subtilty of his enemies, he might haue fallen.

In the second point, let him craue grace and light of God, to know thoroughly all his sinns, which he hath committed that day, and also any others, done in any time of life past, which by forgetfulness or ignorance, he hath not yet confessed, nor amended. Let him acknowledge that of himselfe he is most ignorant,  
and

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and blind to know any good thing; and that through the infinite mercy of God, & the merits of Christ our Lord he must receiue this gift to know himselfe, & therefore let him craue it with humility, to vnderstand his sinnes, and to bewaile them as he ought.

In the third point, let him run ouer al the works, words, and thoughts of that day; and consider well, whether he hath done any wicked worke or omitted to doe any good, vnto which he was bound: And such good workes as he hath done, whether he did not corrupt them and make them naught in the doing, as if he  
cor-

corrected or punished any vpon  
revenge ; if he reiected any  
poore body , not giuing him  
almes as was conuenient ; if  
he said not his prayers with  
attention . In his wordes ,  
let him consider , whether he  
hath sworne without necessi-  
ty , back-bited any , told any  
lye , or vttered any idle or im-  
patiēt words . In his thoughts ,  
let him examine whether he  
hath had any pride , anger ,  
couetousnesse , griefe , at the  
good of his neighbour , vaine  
desires of worldly praise : and  
in these and other such like  
vicked thoughts , let him e-  
xamine himselfe , whether he  
hath cast them quickly from  
him.

him, crauing Gods grace to withstand them, and hath detested them as contrary to the will of God.

In the fourth point. For such finnes as he findeth that he hath committed that day, be they great or small, let him repent and be sory from his hart, and ponder with himselfe, how sinne is an offence done against the maiesty of God, and therefore let him say in his soule, with a detestation thereof; O that I had neuer committed the for any thing in the world. And let him consider, that although he hath many times fallen into the same fault, that he ought



ought not for al that to be dismayed, nor disordinately grieued, but let him humble himselfe; and with a louing hart, and confidence in the goodness of God (who so often as a sinner doth turne vnto him, is ready to receaue him againe) craue pardon at his hands, and let him offer vnto his diuine maiesty, the merits of his holy passion, that through the he would vouchsafe to grant him remission: And if the sinnes, into which he hath fallen that day be of the greatest sort, let him for them condemne himselfe to some pennance, as to fast, or to take away some part of his meate

MEMORIAL. 139

meate or drinke, or to giue  
some almes, or to say three  
Creeds; or thrice *Salve regina*,  
with his armes stretched out  
like a Crosse, in reuerence &  
honor of the Blessed Trinity,  
or the three howers which our  
Lord and Sauour remained  
vpon the Crosse; or five tymes  
to kisse the earth, in honor of  
the five wounds of our Sau-  
our.

In the fift and last point,  
let him purpose in his hart, the  
amendment of those sins; that  
is, not to commit them euer  
any more for all the world; &  
and although he hath fallen a  
thousand tymes into them,  
yet let him a thousand times  
fully

fully purpose to do so no more,  
and when he determineth not  
to commit them againe, let  
him by no meanes trust vpon  
himself, or rely vpon his own  
strength, for the performance  
of that his intent, but let him  
trust vpon the grace of God,  
which he will bestow vpon,  
him for that purpose, through  
the merits of his sacred passi-  
on, as else where hath beene  
declared. And let him con-  
clude with one P A T E R  
N O S T E R to God, praying  
therin for pardon for that is  
past, and grace to amend him-  
selfe, and an A V E M A R I A  
to our blessed Lady, that she  
would vouchsafe for this end,

to assist him with his prayers  
and intercession.

This is the daily axami-  
nation of our conscience: and  
it importeth so much for a mā  
to be diligent herein, and ne-  
uer vpon any occasion, or bu-  
sinesse to omit, albeit he spend  
no more therein, then the  
fourth part of an hower, that  
no words can sufficiently cō-  
mend the same. By the help  
of this examination, a man  
doth ouercome culpable ig-  
norance, & is deliuered from  
those secret sinns, which from  
that do grow, because he doth  
what lieth in him, to know  
the truth, and for the good-  
nesse of God to reueale it. By  
meanes



meanes also of this examination, a man is deliuered from that weakenesse, that blindness, that deformity, which the sinns committed that day, left in his soule, and obtaineth of God more strength, more light, and purity of soule, and doth euery day proceed & go forward in the seruice of God. By this examination doth he likewise fulfill those precepts and admonitions of Christ, so often and so earnestly repeated in the Ghospell. *Watch & pray, because you know not the day nor the hower of your death and iudgement. Be ready, because at that hower which you think not of, the son of the Virgin*  
*Wil*

# MEMORIAL. 142

*Heil come to call you to his diuine  
iudgement.* By this examinatio  
also, doth a man watch ouer  
himself, escaperh the daunger  
& band of his former sins, de-  
liuereth himself from those to  
come, & maketh his soule rea-  
dy for death, yea if it should  
come that very night, as it is  
possible & indeed may come,  
and so he might haue chanced  
vpon a sodaine death, & ther-  
by (had he not examined him-  
selfe before) haue perished &  
beene damned for euer: but  
now hauing before hand e-  
xamined well his conscience,  
with contrition for his sinns,  
is a saued soule. To this  
dayly examination holy Fa-  
thers

144 THE LITTLE  
Fathers do exhort vs , especially S. Basill , who speaketh thus : *Examine at euening , or in the night thy whole dayes Worke : Enter into consideration , and remember thy actions within thy soule , to amend them , and make them better , & compare them with those of the former day , to see whether thou hast amended thy selfe , and endeavour carefully euery day , to leade a more vertuous life , for by these meanes shalt thou be more like , & more neere to the blessed Angels : And more acceptable in the sight of God.*

CHAP.

## CHAP. XI.

*Of another singular meanes for a man to deliuer himselfe from secret sinnes, and that his confessions may be more fruitfull: Which is, to haue one determinat ghostly Father, vnto whom he ought ordinarily to confesse his sinnes.*

---

**A**N other meanes which a man hath to vse for the remedy of these mischiefes is, to haue one confessor, & spirituall Father, who is a prudent man, & of a good conscience, vpon whome ordinarily let  
G him



him rely, & to him often confesse himself, & in such doubts as occur demande his aduice & counsel. Let him not without great cause change his ghostly Father, but keepe one sure and certaine, whome he hath made choise of: and to him let him open his soule & giue an account of his whole life, and not onely of those thinges which be certaynely sinnes, but likewise of those wherein he standeth in doubt: neyther let him only discover his sinnes, but allso his good workes and pennances, and mortificatiōs which he doth, that he may instruct & direct him to do that which is most  
for

for the seruice of God. If our ghostly Father had no other office but to absolue vs from our sins, incōuenient it were not, to confesse one day to one man, and another day to confesse vnto another: but so it is not, for besides this, he hath also the office of a father, and a maister, and of a phisitian; & by reason herof, it appertaineth to him, to teach his ghostly child all such things as be necessary for the good of his soule, and to know the rootes and occasions of his sins, his passions, and wicked inclinations, that he may the better cure them, by prescribing meet remedies for those

diseases: and to know his vertuous actions and good inclinations that he may informe him how to make the more profit of them, for his further increase in vertue: and to vnderstand what pennances he doth, to the end he may teach him the rule of discretion, which touching them he hath to obserue. To him also it belôgeth to appointhim meanes both to preferue himself, and to profit in the seruice of God & also how to continue those good meanes. Wherefore to the end that the ghostly father may performe al these principall parts of his duty, necessary it is, that he haue a very  
good

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good insight in his ghostly child, and a long knowledge and experience of the state of his soule, that as reason shall require he may apply one day one remedy, and another day another, and to continue it so long, as shall be convenient, and to enquire whether he reape any profit by such counsell & meanes as he doth prescribe: which thing cannot be performed, if the penitent do not vsually repaire to one ordinary ghostly father. Whē a scholer learneth an art of some wise and expert maister, it importeth much, that he haue but one man to teach him, for if he goe one day to



150 THE LITTLE  
one, and another to another,  
that which he learneth with  
one, he forgetteth with ano-  
ther. And when any sicke bo-  
dy is for some great infirmity  
vnder the hands of a learned  
phisitian, requisite it is, that  
the same man doe proceede  
forwarde in the cure of his  
disease: for if one look to him  
one day, and another haue  
care of him another, his reco-  
uery is much hindred, and it  
falleth out sometymes, that  
what one doth, another doth  
vndoe. In this manner, it fa-  
reth in the art of good life, &  
in the phisicke of the soul: for  
it importeth very much, that  
the ghostly Father being a  
wife

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wise & discreet man, should ordinarily be but one, who may continue on his good counsell, and the cure of his soule. This aduise giueth *Saint Bonauenture* in these wordes. *Make choise of one ghostly Father, who is of discretion, learning, and experience, to whom confesse thy selfe, and open all the defectes and tentations of thy soul, that he may prescribe thee a remedy, and change him not eyther for shame, or for feare to be confounded: nay rather for thy greater confusion, enforce thy selfe to confesse to that man, and open vnto him the state of thy soule, as plaine'y as thou canst.* This is the counsell of *Saint*

*Bonaventure*. And that we ought likewise to declare vnto such an ordinary ghostly Father, our deuotions, penances, and other diuine inspirations, and comforts, *S. Dorotheus* and the holy Abbot *Moses*, and other holy men do aduise vs, as a thing most important, to haue our soule wel directed, and defended from the craft and subtilty of the Diuell. And as I say, that ordinarily it is good to keepe one ghostly Father; so iust causes may fall out, for which it may be expedient to confesse some tyme vnto another, & to chāg one man and take another, to whome vsually he should repaire

# MEMORIAL. 153

paire for confession. And if it be not done vpon lightnesse or a vaine desire, but vpon necessity, or for som iust respect, it is not to be reprehended, especially if the cause be, for that our old ghostly Father cannot be had at all, or at that tyme: for then shal it not only be well done to confesse vnto another, but it should be a great fault not to do it. For if because our vsual ghostly Father cānot be had, one should giue ouer his ordinary confessions, and wax slack in his good custome, to goe ofren to confession, it were certaynly a very bad signe: for by that, doth he mak it manifest, that



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in his confessions, he sought his owne content & not God: and that he desired his owne temporall comfort, & not the true good of his owne soule: for had he sought the pleasure of God, and the profit of his soule, when his old confessor could not be had, he vould quickly haue made choise of another, seing in that he did please God, and procure the good of his owne soule.

By this meanes of keeping one ordinary ghostly Father, who is a wise man, and one that feareth God, he that sincerely desireth, and laboureth to saue his soule, shal deliuer himselfe from all euils and in-

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conueniences of culpable ignorance, and from erring in such things as pertain to his saluation. For seeing his confessor, is in the place of Christ our Lord, and the penitent soule commeth vnto him, as though it were to the feete of Christ himselfe; it pertaineth to the piety of our mercifull maister, and to the fidelity of his promises, to teach and illuminate such a soule, in all things necessary for his saluation, seing he doth seeke it, by those meanes which himselfe hath ordayned in his Church, and especially by this of such humility, and so acceptable in his sight: which thing for the

great comfort and security of  
all, our Lord hath vouchsafed  
to confirme with wonderfull  
examples. *Moyſes* was in a  
great errour when he alone  
would heare all cauſes exami-  
ned before himſelfe, being  
more then he was able to do,  
by reaſon wherof many cauſes  
were not diſpatched: God to  
deliuer him from this igno-  
rance, brought a certayne  
Priest called *Iethro* from the  
place of his dwelling, into the  
deſert where *Moyſes* was, by  
whoſe meanes he learned a  
more ready way for the diſ-  
patch of thoſe peoples cauſes.  
*David* likewise was much de-  
ceaued, when he thought that  
God

God had vouchsafed him of that fauour , as that he should be the man, who should build him a Temple , and that this was his diuine pleasure : and God did deliuer him from this ignorance , by meanes of the Prophet *Nathan* : by which fact, God shewed how much it doth please him , to teach his faythfull seruants such thinges as be necessary , and profitable for their soules , and to deliuer them from ignorance and deceits, by meanes of his Priests and seruants , especially by the help of a mans ordinary ghostly Father , and in the Sacrament of Pennance , seing  
though



though *Moyſes* were his familiar friend, and who, as the Scripture ſaith did talke with him face to face, that is to ſay, in ſome paſſing high contemplation : & alſo *David* though his great ſervant, to whome he reuealed ſuch deep mysteries, yet it pleaſed him not to deliuer them from theſe ignorances, but by the meanes of others, to the end that being thus inſtructed by the will of God, they ſhould alſo exerciſe humility, ſubmitting themſelues to men in other things, far inferior to themſelues.

Yet neceſſary it is, that a mā ſhould here note one thing, to the end that God may by  
the

the meanes of his ghostly Father, teach him the truth, and direct him in the way of vertue, and that is, that he come to confession, with that end & intention which he ought to do, to wit, with a desire to vnderstand the truth, and that which is most expedient for his soule, although it be a thing of trauail & that which will put him to much trouble and grieve; and with all let him craue of God, to inspire and put into the hart of his ghostly Father, that which he hath to speake, because if he come to his confessor with a desire only, that he should tel him that which doth please him.

himselfe, and to declare the truth if it be fitting to his own humor, and if not, to say nothing, then for punishment of that wicked intention, God vseth to permit the ghostly Father not certainly to tell him the truth, nor that which is necessary for him, but rather the contrary: for so hath God threatned by his Prophet *Ezechiel* in these words: *If a man who hath his hart far from me, cometh vnto a Prophet, and by meanes of him would be taught concerning me; I will permit that the Prophet shall be deceiued and deceaue him: according to the wicked intention of him that asketh, shall be the de-*

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*deceit of him that answereth.* So did it happen to King *Achab*, and to many more, as experience hath taught vs, who going to aske counsell for matters of their soule with a naughty intention haue been deceaued. Wherefore very necessary it is, that the penitent which desireth truly to be illuminated, & directed of God, by meanes of his ghostly Father, that he should come vnto him with a pure and sound intention, that is to say, with an effectuall will, that he should tel and instruct him in that which is most acceptable to God, and most necessary & profitable for his owne soule,  
al



although it be contrary to his  
own liking, & hard and diffi-  
cult to performe. And com-  
ming in this manner, God will  
teach him by this meanes all  
truth, & with the help of his  
grace make it easie, & sweete  
to effect that which seemeth  
vnto him very sharpe & diffi-  
cult. So certayne be holy men  
of this most merciful proper-  
ty of God, towards such as  
come with a good intention,  
that Venerable *Richard*, with  
great confidence therof, writ-  
eth these words: *Curious per-  
sons are sometymes deceaued of  
the Diuell, but the vertuous that  
with a good intētion craue coun-  
sell, and sincerely open vnto their  
ghost-*

ghostly Fathers, not only their  
sins, but also the tentations of  
their soules, these walke the right  
way free from deceite, because he  
cannot erre, that with a found  
intention asketh counsell, and is  
gouerned by him; neither can he  
be beguiled by the enemy that  
doth discouer his tentations.

This which venerable Richard  
affirmeth, may in generall be  
hoped for of the goodnesse of  
God, but more certayne it is,  
in those thinges which be  
done through Obedience:  
for when they be of thē selues  
lawfull, although the superi-  
our that prescribeth thē may  
erre through ignorance, or  
malice: yet the penitent that  
in

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in those things obeyeth, cannot  
erre by obeying, for as much  
as he doth in that the will of  
God: concerning which point,  
and of the necessity and profit  
which commeth by obedience  
to our ghostly Father, else  
where more hath been spoke.

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## C H A P. XII.

*Of an other excellent remedy to  
deliuer our selues from the  
harne of secret sinnes, and to  
supply the defects of our for-  
mer confessions, and that is,  
with care and diligence, to  
make a generall confession.*

**B**E sides the former meanes  
now spoken of, there re-  
mai-

maineth yet another, very excellent, by which Gods servant may deliuer himselfe frō such secret finnes, as proceed from culpable ignorance, and from other disorders before handled. This meanes is, to make a generall Confession of al the finnes of his life past: taking for that, the space of a weeke; in which discharging himselfe from all other businesse, let him enter into himselfe, and running ouer the ten commaundments, let him call to minde as much as he can, all the finnes of his life past, and make his confession of them: and by the help and direction of his ghostly Father  
chosen



chosen out for that purpose, the doing of it will be easy & sweete, in such sort that in an hower or two, he may dispatch it, though it be a confession of many yeares. When as a man in his former confessions hath concealed some mortall sinne through shame, vaine feare, or because he would not bestow any time about the examination of his conscience, or if he went to confession without a purpose to abstaine from mortall sin, in these cases, to make a generall confession, both of all those sinnes vttered in that former bad confession, and of all other sins committed afterward,

erward, is a thing necessary,  
 and commanded by the lawe  
 of God. But when a man hath  
 discharged himselfe well in  
 his former confessions, cer-  
 taine and sure it is, that bound  
 he is not to make a generall  
 confession, nor to confesse a-  
 gain those finnes, which be-  
 fore he did confesse: but al-  
 though there be no band or  
 precept, yet very good & hea-  
 uenly counsell it is, & a worke  
 of vvonderfull profit, for ma-  
 ny reasons fouled in the law  
 of God, and in experience,  
 which briefly now I meane  
 to runne ouer.

One of the things which  
 doth much humble a man, is  
 the

the knowledge of himself, his owne infirmity, his owne ignorance, and especially of his finnes and vickednesse. And for this cause *Saint Augustine* calleth humility *the knowledge of a mans selfe*, because it springeth from that, as from the cause and roote thereof. And *Saint Bernard* sayth, that *humility is a contempt of him selfe, as of a very vile thing, growing from the true knowledge thereof*. Seing therefore a man in a generall confession, calleth to mind all his finnes, and beholdeth them all layd together before him, doth consider & note them more attentively, and more clearly doth per-

perceauē all his infirmity, all his ignorance, and all his malice, by that meanes doth he humble himselfe, thinke basely of himselfe, as hee deserueth, and despiseth himself as a most vile and wretched creature. To this may be also added, that he doth open all his ignorance, and malice, to another man like vnto himself, & of all that doth accuse and blame himselfe, crauing at his hands, that hee would correct and punish him, and inioyne him such pennance for his sins, as hee iustly deserueth. And as all these be such actions, by which a man doth abase, contemne, & han-

H

dle



de himselfe as a miserable  
wretch so therby humility of  
hart doth increase: and hereof  
it proceedeth, that Almighty  
God, whose property is to ex-  
alt the humble, and to bestow  
vpon them grace, light, and  
comfort, seing a man in this  
manner to be humbled, gi-  
ueth him new and plentifull  
giftes of grace, wherewith he  
doth enrich his soule, & give  
it newe beames of heauenly  
light, by meanes whereof he  
doth lay open before him all  
such grieuous sins as through  
ignorance and lacke of confi-  
deration before tyme he left  
vnconfessed.

One of the things likewise,  
which

which maketh a man patiently to endure the miseries of this life, as infirmities of body, pouerty, iniuries, and persecutions of men, and the scourges of the Diuell, is to know and consider the punishments which for his grievous sins he deserueth: when a man examineth and confesseth only his veniall sinnes, which he did since his last confession, and doth not consider nor ponder those which in other tymes he hath committed, vnwillingly doth he suffer any punishment or iniury, and doth complaine and grieue at litle things: but when he maketh a general confessiō, then

H 2 doth

doth he enter into the closet  
of his owne conscience, and  
doth there behold the bottom.  
lesse pit of wickednesse, and  
doth looke vpon his hart, as  
an impostume from whence  
such corruption of sinnes did  
proceede, and then doth he  
thinke vpon the grieuous  
paines, which for the he hath  
deserued, and iudgeth hel fire  
to be to litle for the iust pun-  
nishment of such horrible sins,  
committed against the maie-  
sty of God. And so doth he  
willingly offer himselfe with  
patience, to endure all the af-  
flictions and miseries of this  
life, and dare not complaine  
of any harme, or aduersity  
that

that befalleth him, knowing how litle all is to that which he deserueth. Blessed *Saint Gregory* the Pope, who was a mirrour of all vertue, being vniustly persecuted by *Mauritius* the Emperour, and very iniuriously intreated, the holy man calling to mind, such sins as he had committed, in not seruing of God, with such purity & perfection as he ought, endured al those iniuries with such patience, that writing to the same Emperour, he vttereth these words : *I beleene that thou shalt so much the better appease the wrath of Almighty God, by how much more senerely, thou shalt afflict, and*



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*punish mee , because I haue so  
badly serued him.* If the know-  
ledge of such small finnes, did  
cause this *Saint*, to think that  
he deserued any kind of pun-  
ishment for them , and was  
a motiue, so willingly to haue  
suffered the; how much more  
will the consideration of so  
many and so great finnes , ac-  
companied with that heauen-  
ly light , which God bestow-  
eth vpon him, that humbleth  
himself in making of a gene-  
rall confession , cause him to  
thinke, that far more iustly he  
doth deserue any paines, that  
God shall in this life lay vpon  
him, and with patience to en-  
dure the same.

Besides

Besides all this, that which doth very much mooue a Christian man to loue God, and to be beloued of him, is to consider well the particular benefits and mercies which of him he hath receaued : and this falleth out in a generall confession, wherein a man by calling to mind his sins, and confessing them, doth enter into consideration, and ponder, what great mercies God hath shewed him, in deliue-  
ring him from so great evils,  
and from so many great dan-  
gers of euerlasting damnatiō,  
and in suffering with so great  
patience, such notable iniu-  
ries as he hath done against

H 4 him,

him, and pardoning with so great clemency such heynous finnes: and that whereas he hath so longe tyme offended God; so boldely, and without all shame, yet hath he like a most mercifull Father, continually bestowed vpon him incomparable benefits: and at that very tyme, when he did displease & contemne him, by his wicked life, did the same good Lord preserue him, cherish, and maintaine him with his creatures, inspired into his soule holy cogitations, and did offer for him vnto his eternall Father, the merits of his sacred passion. And whereas he might most iustly,

iustly , infinite tymes haue  
 throwne him into hell; as he  
 did diuers other sinners , yet  
 delt he not so with him , but  
 expected , and preserved him  
 from the fury of the Diuels,  
 and with his potent hand, de-  
 liuered him from the bands of  
 his finnes, and the daunger of  
 euerlasting damnation. The  
 knowledge of these verities,  
 doth a general Confession  
 worke, bringing to a mans  
 memory all the sins of his life  
 past , and making him to ac-  
 cuse himselfe for committing  
 them , and vwith this spiritual  
 feling , doth he increase more  
 and more, in the feruent loue  
 of so louing a Lord and mai-



ster, vvho vvith such incredible longanimity hath expected and endured him, and vvith so great loue & swetnes, hath cherished, made much of, and drawne him vnto himselfe, and vvith such Fatherly pity hath pardoned him; and therefore doth he prayse him, blesse him, giue him thanks, and sing foorth his mercies, saying vvith the Prophet David: *If our Lord had not helped me, my soule had now byn in hell. Blessed be our Lord vvho hath not suffered me to perishe betwixte the teeth of mine enemies the Diuells, being made their prey: my soule through his piety and grace, hath byn deliuered from*  
*the*

*the wicked snares of them, that would haue carried me to euerslasting damnation. Thou hast broken in peeces O Lord, the bands of my sins and passions, and therefore wil I alwaies offer vnto thee, the sacrifice of prayse and thanks giuing.*

To this may be added, that of such sins as a man hath in former tyme confessed, & yet had not then happily all that contrition and sorrow which was requisit, being now whē he maketh his general confession, touched more forcibly vwith Gods diuine inspiratiō, and illuminated vwith greater light from heauen, he doth more bewaile, conceaue gre-

ter griefe in his soule, & doth  
satisfy God for them vvith  
more sorrow and contrition  
of hart. And to new griefe  
for his old finnes, he ioyneth  
also a new purpose of the a-  
mendment of his life; and so  
the whole man is renevved,  
and becommeth better, and  
more zealous in the seruice  
of God. These and other such  
like reasons do declare, the  
singular commodities, which  
redound to the soule by ma-  
king of a generall confession,  
& experience teacheth them  
to be so sure and certayne,  
that those which hath made  
it, do say that they vvould not  
for the vvhole vvorld, haue  
vvanted.

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wanted that spirituall profit,  
 which by meanes therof their  
 soule hath receaved. But ne-  
 cessary it is here to note, that  
 although the fruits of a gene-  
 rall confession well made, be  
 so great and pretious, that  
 yet one may exceed therein:  
 as for example, when a man  
 hath made a generall confes-  
 sion once, or oftener, and it  
 was well done, and that to a  
 prudent and discreet ghostly  
 Father, and yet for all this he  
 would once againe, make an  
 other generall confession, not  
 moued vpon any of those  
 good reasons now spoken of,  
 as for to humble himselfe the  
 more, and to beginne with a  
 more



more resolute determination to amend his life, but only vpon scruples, because he thinketh that he was not before well confessed, and that by another generall confession he shall quiet his conscience: in this case, when the prudent ghostly Father knoweth, that it is a scruple, that moueth him to desire it, conuenient it is, that he should not do it; because the way to ouercome a scruple, is not to yeeld vnto it, but to resist it, & to do contrary to that which it would: and the duty of a spirituall Father in this case is, to determin what is a scruple, and what is a iust cause, for one

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one to confesse that which hath beene confessed before, and to set downe what is expedient for the penitent to do. And the duty of the penitent or ghostly child is, to beleue and obey his ghostly Father, and that peace and quietnes of conscience, which he shall neuer obtain by yielding vn-to the scruple, shall he find by beleeuing and obeying his ghostly Father, as before hath beene declared.

CHAP.

## C H A P. XIII.

*Of such defects, as be an impediment to many, who doe often communicate, that they receaue not the plentiful fruit of the B. Sacrament.*

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**A**mong such persons as frequent the Sacraments, as there be some which by often receauing of the Blessed Sacrament, do increase, and wonderfully proceede in all vertues: so there be some other, which do often communicate, and though they find not their conscience guilty of any mortall sinne, yet do they

they not profit, nor go forward in vertue, as reason would, nor feele in their soules, many of those heavenly effects, which they haue experience of, that do communicat with all that disposition which his requisit: wherefore it is a thing of great importance, to lay open the causes of this so great a spirituall damage, and the remedies for the same. The ordinary causes of this little profit, and spirituall harme in such kind of persons be two. The one is, to receaue the Blessed Sacrament only vpon custom, that is, not hauing before hand, any consideration or  
spirituall



spiritual feeling of that, which they intend to do, but only mooued of a certaine dry custome, which they haue to communicate, as they haue in other businesse, which is, as though they should say, I communicate because others do it, and because I haue of long time vsed it, and I will do that which I see other vertuous persons to practise. Another cause is, aduisedly to fall into many veniall sinnes, and not to correct or amend them. Such veniall sins as for want of care and diligence, they fall into that feare God, and be diligent in his seruice, worke not this harme, but those only which

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which be committed deliberately by them that be lukewarme, and slacke in the service of God: as for example, longe distractions of vaine thoughts, merry lyes, little detractions, and impatience, light laughing, superfluous care and curiosity in apparell, in meate, in recreation, and spending of time, ouer much talking, presumption of themselves in their owne hart, to praise themselves in words, to loue honor, and commendation of men, and curiosities of the senses. Into these and such other like veniall sins (whereof we haue spoken before) when a man aduisedly doth

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doth fall, and correcteth not  
himselfe by true penance, &  
amendment of life, they work  
that harme now spoken of, &  
do greatly hinder the fruit of  
the blessed Sacrament.

The reason hereof is, be-  
cause as all holy men do teach,  
to come vnto the holy com-  
munion, and to receaue the  
great and plentiful commodity,  
which by meanes thereof  
God vseth to bestow vpon  
his seruants, requisite it is, to  
come with much deuotion, &  
that a man doe for his part  
what lieth in him to haue it.  
And to come to the Blessed  
Sacrament with deuotion, is  
to bring a feruent desire, and  
ready.

ready mind to please God, and  
to dedicate himselfe from his  
very hart to his diuine seruice,  
and to come with and hunger  
to be spiritually refreshed by  
this diuine banquet and food  
of heaven. And because this  
 deuotion is wrought in the  
soule by meditation of hea-  
uenly thinges, and by purity  
of conscience, as holy men af-  
firme, and experience doth  
teach, hereof it proceedeth  
that for a man to offer to com-  
municate, not hauing prepa-  
red himselfe before hand by  
prayer and meditation, and  
to purge away veniall sins,  
which do distract and make  
the soule somewhat cold, he  
doth



doth not receaue all the fruit  
of the holy communion. This  
reason so sure and certaine,  
and so worthy of considerati-  
on, *S. Bonauenture* doth note  
in these words. *When thou  
mindest to communicat, examine  
first with what charity and fer-  
uour of deuotion thou comcest,  
because to communicat as is con-  
uenient, we ought not only to a-  
uoid mortall sinnes, but also to  
shun venia'l, which through ne-  
gligence, idlenesse, distraction,  
or an euill custome be multiplied:  
for although they do not kill the  
soule, because they take not away  
the life of grace; yet do they make  
a man more cold, more unde-  
uout, unwilling to doe good, and  
make*

ma'e him ill prepared and disposed, to receaue the holy communion: wherefore he that mindeth to communicate let him first holpen with Gods grace, and stirred vp to deuotion by good meditations, and kindlea with the flame of Charity, bannish from himselfe the dust and chaffe of veniall sinnes: and therefore haue care O Christian, that thou comdest not to communicate without consideration, nor much cold in deuotion: for then thou comdest not with that disposition, which thou shouldest haue. All these be the wordes of S. Bonauenture: in which he doth let down what the causes be, that hinder such as frequent the Bleis'd Sacrament,

ment, from receauing that great profit and good, which by meanes thereof they both might & ought. And although be a common and true opinion, that for such causes and finnes as these, which be not mortall, that such as communicat do not loose all the fruit of the Blessed Sacrament, but that they receaue increase of grace; yet certaine also it is, that they do lose that plentiful and abundant fruit of diuers graces and vertues which are ordinarily bestowed vpon such as come better prepared, and other wonderfull effects which vsually it worketh in their soules that are more pure  
and

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and deuout.

CHAP. XIII.

*Wherein is declared more at  
large, how for the receauing  
of more abundant fruit of the  
holy Communion, conuenient  
it is, to purify the soule from  
veniall sinnes.*

---

**O**Vt of the premisses Gods  
seruants that frequēt the  
holy Cōmunion may gather,  
what meanes they haue to  
vse, for the amending of these  
defectes, and the remouing of  
these impediments: whereof  
one is, much to enforce them-  
selues, to auoide not only  
mortall sinnes, but also to di-  
minish



minish and lessen what they can those that be venial, vsing for that end mortification, whereof before we haue at large intreated, for that is the meanes by which the soule is cured of the disease of her passions, and is purified from venial sins, which out of them do spring. And with this purity, a Christiā man may securely go vnto that holy table, as *S. Chrysostome* doth exhort him saying: *Come to receaue God with all purity, and giue thy hart with great confidence: by this most holy body, which heere I receaue, I doe not account my selfe any more to be dust and ashes, no more to be a captiue but free, because*

*cause I hope to obtaine heauen,  
and those goods which be there,  
as immortall and euerlasting life,  
a place amongst the Angells, and  
the glorious company of Christ.*  
Thus saith *S. Chrysostome*. And  
the glorious Pope *S. Gregory*  
doth note & ponder this point  
more in particuler, and that  
most excellently: who admo-  
nishing all faithful Christiāns,  
to purify themselves from sin,  
for the receauing of the blef-  
sed Sacramēt, sayth, that they  
ought not only to cleere the-  
selves from mortal sins, which  
do wholly hinder the fruit of  
this most diuine Sacrament,  
but also from veniall, which  
be a let to that great spirituall

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cōmodity which would come  
by meanes therof. These be  
his words, worthy of due cō-  
sideration: Those that come to  
receaue the consecrated hoste,  
which giueth true health, and do  
harbour sins in their soul, which  
they haue committed, do not re-  
ceane the fruite of health: and  
therfore albeit they receaue with  
their mouth, the true Sacramēt,  
yet do they not receaue with  
their soule, the vertue & fulnesse  
thereof; because that is receaued  
only of them, that come fasting  
from finnes, and be adorned with  
vertues. And because the iust al-  
so, and the elect seruants of God,  
cannot leade this life, without  
falling into some sins, therefore  
the

the remedy which they haue, is, that they enforce and stirre up themselves, daily to purge their soule by penance, from those daily sins, into which they fall through humane infirmity: for if they haue not this care daily to purify themselves from their sinnes, although they be very smal, by litle and litle, the soule is filled full of sins, which doe deprive them of the fruit of the inward and spirituall fulnes: and therefore to auoide this harme S. Paule doth admonish a Christian man that he should prooue himselfe before he doth communicate, that is to say, that he should purge and discharge himselfe from sinne, that being proued & purified, he may



*come to the table of our Lord:  
Wherefore seeing we sinne daily,  
daily also let vs bewaile our sins,  
and do penance for them, and  
the more carefully we doe purify  
our selues from these daily sins,  
with the sorrow of penance, so  
much the more in that spirituall  
banquet, shall we receaue the a-  
bundant fruit of heauenly grace.  
Al this is out of S. Gregory, in  
which, diuinely he putteth a  
differēce, betwixt that harme  
which mortal sin doth work,  
which is to hinder the whole  
fruit of the blessed Sacramēt,  
and to make a man vworthy  
of condemnation: and the  
harne vvhich cometh by ve-  
nial sins, if they be not washed  
away*

away by pennance, for they do much let the v wonderfull commodity, & effectes of the holy Communion. And very seriously doth he admonish vertuous and iust men, to purge themselues daily from such sinnes, especially v when they meane to communicate, because the more cleere they be from them, so much the more shal they receaue the plentiful fruit of heavenly gifts and graces, and especially shal they feele in their soule that diuine fulnesse and inward sweetnesse v which is bestowed vpon them, that haue the true hunger of God.

## CHAP. XV.

*How to receaue much fruite of the blessed Sacrament, necessary it is, for a man to prepare himself with recollection, and meditation: and what manner of meditations or considerations are good to be used for that purpose.*

**T**He second thing, vvhich the seruants of God haue to do, is to recollect theselues before they communicate, to the end they may pray & meditate diuine things, conformable to those documentes vvhich vve prescribed in the treatise

treatise of prayer; & although  
 a man may out of any matter,  
 which he meditateth, draw  
 deuotion meete for the holy  
 Communion: yet the best &  
 most fit considerations to fur-  
 nish himselfe withall for this  
 purpose, be these. Let him me-  
 ditate vpon the institution of  
 this most holy Sacrament in  
 the last supper; how our Lord  
 rose from the table, tooke of  
 his garment, and putting a  
 linnen cloth about him, did  
 vpon his knees wash his Di-  
 sciples feete; and afterward  
 when they were set, how he  
 tooke bread and wine into  
 his hands, & by his omni-  
 potent power did consecrate &

I s                      change



change them into his body & bloud, which were vnited to his soule and diuinity, & how when he hadst first communicated him selfe, as many holy men do write, he did streight wayes with his owne hands distribute his own body and bloud to his Apostles, and withal gaue them authority also to consecrate his body, and to giue it to al faithfull people. Heere let a Christian man meditate attentiuely, that infinit magnificence of the son of God, that liberality neuer before heard of, and that vnspeakable charity, by which he vouchsafed to giue himselfe, to be eaten in such a

won-

wonderfull sort, thereby to bind vs vnto him by a most straight band of loue, and by these meanes to heale our infirmities, and to make vs after his likenesse, holy, pure, diuine, and heauenly. From this consideration, let him labour to procure a great hunger & very feruent desire to eate this bread of life, & to draw from it a ready vvill to please in all things the author of life, who with so great loue, doth giue himselfe to vs for meat: Let him likewise consider & ponder, vvhat great purity is required, to come to receaue this diuine food, seing the Apostles that were in the state

of grace, & cleere from mortal sins, yet our Sauour preparing them with more purity for the receauing of the holy Communion, did wash their feete, which was as *S. Bernard* sayth, to purify them by a mystery from their veniall sinnes: For the affections of the soule which doe quickly cleaue vnto earthly thinges, be the feete of our soule, & these we must wash, and make cleane to enter into heauen, and to come vnto the holy Communion: & this mystery as that blessed *mā* sayth, did our Sauour represent by that holy kind of vwashing. Out of this let a man likewise  
inforce

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informe himselfe, to be sory  
for all his sinnes, both mortall  
and veniall, and to purpose  
the amendment of them all: &  
beholding how vile, and vn-  
worthy he hath made himself  
through his sinnes, and that  
so great purity is required, to  
receave so infinite maiesty, in  
so much that if he should pre-  
pare himselfe continually, for  
the space of a thousand yea-  
res, to receave him, by de-  
vout prayers, holy workes,  
and with the merits of all  
Saints; yet all would be very  
little or nothing, to receave  
him as deserueth: let him en-  
deauour also out of this to  
conceave feare & reuerence:  
for



for as from loue, desire groweth and a ready wil, so from holy feare springeth reuerence, with which he ought to come to the holy communion. Another consideration wherewith Gods seruant may prepare himselfe to come vnto the sacred cōmunion with deuotion is this: Let him consider the dignity, & high maiesty of that Lord, whome he is to receiue: let him think, how in that instant, in which the words of consecration be spoken, the substance of bread which remained vnder the accidents of the hoast, giueth ouer to be bread, by the conuersion of the same, into the  
body.

body of Christ, and so the creature giuing place to the Creator, in that place where before was the substance of the bread, succeedeth the body of Christ, which was framed by the holy Ghost, in the wombe of the most immaculat Virgin: and because the body of Christ liueth not without blood, there also is presēt the most pretious blood of Christ, in the veines of his most holy body: and for as much also as the body of Christ liueth not without the soule, there is likewise his most glorious soule, in which are contained the vnspeakable treasures of the power, and glory

glory of God: and for as much as the body & soule of Christ, are vnited with the person of God: Christ is God and man, & he that is there contained, is true God, of infinit maiesty and power. After this let him prepare himselfe to consider with attention: Now I am to receaue God: & that he may the better vnderstand what a Lord he is, whome he is to receaue, let him by meditation, place himselfe at the gate of heauen, there let him consider the glory, and beauty of that supreme maiesty, and behould, how by his infinke bounty, he doth enflame with wonderfull:

derfull loue all the citizens of  
heauen, and with the sight of  
his eternall beauty, doth mak  
them all blessed, and infinitely  
delight them. Let him view,  
with what reuerence, all the  
Saints and Angels, euen to  
the highest Seraphims, doe  
stand in his presence, how  
they do adore him, how they  
doe praise him, how they do  
glorify him, how they doe  
loue him, how they exalt his  
Name: and after he hath spent  
some time in the admiration  
of so infinire greatnes, and  
glory, let him turne vnto  
himselſe, and thinke thus in  
his owne ſoule: This very  
God, whose maiesty doth  
terrify



terrify me, am I to receaue in-  
to my mouth and body, this  
infinit good which doth mak  
ioyfull the Citty of God, this  
selfesame am I to inclose in  
mine hart, and this supreme  
creator of all things, before  
whose maiesty, the Seraphins  
and all the glorious company  
of heauen, be prostrate with  
great renerence, him am I to  
behold, and to touch vnder  
those accidents or outward  
formes, and to receaue into  
my body, for the foode of my  
soule. And this so great a Lord  
doth come vnto me, ouer-  
come with loue, and drawne  
by loue, and he commeth to  
enamour me of himselfe, and  
by

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by loue to turne me into himselfe, he commeth to bestow vpon me, the treasures of his grace and glory, and to translate me from earth to heauen. Out of this consideration wil our soule gather great loue, and reuerence to come vnto the holy communion: for how can it choose, but be burnt vp in loue, at the consideration of so infinit goodnesse and bounty, who hath done so many things for his loue, and who so desireth his loue: how can it be, that being a sinner he should not reuerence, with an holy kind of feare, that infinite maiesty before whome vvith the eyes of his soule,  
he

he beholdeth al the princes of  
heauen to stand trembling for  
reuerence.

Other consideratiōs, more  
proper and more vsuall, with  
which the soule hath to pre-  
pare it selfe, to receaue this  
most diuine Sacrament, be  
the mysteries of our Sauours  
passion: for one of the princi-  
pall reasons of the institution  
of this Sacrament was, to the  
end we should alwaies haue  
present, and liuely in our me-  
mory, and affection, the pas-  
sion of Christ, and all that  
which he did and suffered for  
vs, and this is presented vnto  
vs, in the mystery of the Masse  
and Communion, and there-  
fore

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fore a very proper and fit preparation it is before Communion, to discourse by meditation, vpon some of the principal mysteries of his passion, and to entertaine our selues for some time with attention, in some one of them. And from hēce shall we also draw, as afterwards shall be handled, the holy acts of contrition, feare, thanks-giuing, loue, and resignation of our selues: in which thinges consisteth that deuotion which is necessary for the receauing of the holy Communion: & very great reason there is, that we should vndertake this so smal a labour, as attentiuely to consider



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consider, what our good Lord  
suffered for our sake, seeing  
himselfe vouchsafed to suffer  
for our loue: and this medi-  
tation is so effectuell and pro-  
fitable, that by it, we do dis-  
pose our selues, to receaue the  
wonderful effects of this most  
heauenly Sacrament. This ad-  
monition doth *S Cyril* giue vs  
very diuinely in these words.  
*I beseech thee, that togeather  
with thy holy life, thou dost pre-  
pare thy selfe to communicate  
with godly considerations; & be-  
leeue me, that this blessing of  
God ( for so he calleth the holy  
Sacrament ) will deliuer thee,  
not only from death but also from  
all the infirmities of thy soule,  
because*

because by meanes of this Sacrament, Christ dwelleth in our soules, and by his vertue doth he mitigate and pacify our passions, and quiet the perturbations of our hart increase and for ify piety and all vertue in vs. & doth deliuer vs from all sinne. Thus writeth S. Cyril. Wherefore let Gods seruant, come to the holy Communion, and let him come with a pure intention, and holy purpose, that is, to vniue himselfe vnto Christ by perfect loue, as to the spoule of his soule, to heale his passions, to purge himselfe from sinnes, to satisfy for the paines thereof, to giue thanks for benefits receaued, to find ease

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ease and comfort in tribulation,  
to overcome some temptation,  
and finally to obtaine  
some particuler grace. Let  
him come with consideration,  
with reuerence, with an  
hunger and desire, springing  
from loue, and he shall obtain  
whatsoever he desireth, be-  
cause he is that good shep-  
heard, which saith and pro-  
miseth, *Come vnto me al ye that  
labour and are burdened, & I wil  
giue you repose and comfort.*

CHAP.

## CHAP. XVI.

*Of that outward reuerence, humility, and modesty, with which we ought to come vnto the holy Communion.*

**A**lthough the principall deuotion, requisite for the holy Communion, consisteth in the hart; yet because that which is external proceedeth from the inward soule, & God also requireth it, I haue thought good to set down such defects, as herein sometyme do fall out, and to prescribe remedies for the same. Some persons which  
K are



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are carefull to serue God, and often go to confession, coming to the Altar to communicate be in their gallant, and braue apparell, their face drowned in their ruffs, and with gloues on their hands; and to maintaine their authority, desirous they are to communicate alone, and to haue a distinct place separat from the rest. Al this is contrary to that reuerence which is due to this most holy Sacrament, and to that humility with which necessary it is, that they should come to that diuine table. Reuerence therefore requireth that they come with plaine & simple appatel, with a comely face

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face and modest hands. And if *Saint Paul* in prayer only, requireth this reuerence and outward modesty, how much more then conuenient is it, that we should haue the same, when we come to the holy Communion. Humility also requireth, that a man should acknowledge himself vnworthy to approache vnto this holy table, and to thinke of himselfe, that any other person of those which doe communicate, deserueth at that tyme the better place, and also to be ashamed, & confounded, that they will so much as admit him to the lowest roome in that heavenly ban-

quet . If in the feast of a mortal man, or to eate vpon earthly meate, our Sauiour requieth that vve should come vvith this humility : how much more necessary is it, that this should be obserued, vvhen vve come to this holy banquet , vvhere he that inuiterh vs is God, & the meate which is receaued is God himselfe .

Some likewise vvhen they communicate hould dovvne their heads too low , or doe couer it , and some doe not open their mouth in such decent sort as is necessary for the receauing of the sacred host , and by these disorders they

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they be sometyne the cause  
that the Priest doeth light  
vwith the B. Sacrament vpon  
their cloake, or their lips, or  
some other part of their face,  
and that sometyms by this  
meanes it breaketh and some  
smal peece falleth of: vvher-  
in they ought to consider  
hovv great an inconuenience  
this is, seing in the least peece  
of all, the glorious body of  
Christ is as entire, and vwith  
as much maiesty, as it is in  
the vvhole hoast, and as it is  
in heauen it selfe. Wherefore  
to auoide these inconuenien-  
ces and to haue that modesty  
vvhich is necessary, the duty  
of him that meaneth to com-



municat is , to haue his face  
vncouered, straight, & quiet,  
and to vse silence vwhen the  
Priest commeth vnto him,  
because it is no tyme then to  
pray vocally, and therefore let  
him meditate vpō some good  
thing inwardly in his soule,  
and vwhen he is to receaue,  
let him open his mouth mo-  
derately , and put forth his  
tongue tovvards his lippes ,  
and vpon that receaue the sa-  
cred host ; and vwhen he hath  
taken it , let him not breake,  
nor presse it vvith his teeth ,  
but suffer it a little to be moi-  
stened, and so to passe down  
svveetly , & vvith reuerence:  
if there be any good externall  
vvorke,

vvorke , conuenient to be  
 vvell and decently done;  
 how much more ought this ,  
 being so diuine , so impor-  
 tant , and so much to the glo-  
 ry of God ? Whereunto that  
 saying of *Saint Paul* doth es-  
 pecially agree; *Doe all thinges*  
*with honesty , comlineffe , and*  
*good order.*

## C H A P. XVII.

*Of that quiet and repose, With  
which we ought to come unto  
the blessed Sacrament: and  
what thanks are to be giuen  
vnto God after the receauing  
thereof.*

**A**Nother notable defect,  
into which many per-  
sons that frequent the Sacra-  
ments doe fall, is, that they  
come to communicate with  
much hast & disquiet, so that  
they are scarce entred into  
the church, or come from the  
feete of their ghostly Father,  
but straight way without any  
more

more stay, they go to communicate : And that which is worie , some so soone as they haue receaued , vvithout giuing any more quiet or repose to that heauenly foode , and vvithout bestowing any tyme in giuing of thankes to that diuine guest, whom they haue entertained, straight waies go out of the Church , fall a talking vvith others , or elle betake them selues to some other such busines . All these disorders, do much hinder the fruit of this most holy Sacrament : and therefore very necessary it is , to prescribe some remedy for the cure of the same: vvherefore omitting to speake



of some particuler case of necessity, in which a man cannot expect, before he doth communicat, nor stay after he hath done: that which vsually herein is to be obserued is, that when he goeth to the holy Communion, that he do it with quiet and repose of mind, forgetting all earthly businesse and cares, and committing them to the prouidence of God, to bestow his vvhole heart in thinking vpon that infinite goodnesse, which he is to receaue, craving of him, that he vwould vouchsafe to adorne his soule with that humility, that purity and loue which is requisite.

And

And let him stirre vp himself  
to do so, vvith this confidera-  
tion: O Lord, if a potent and  
rich King were to ly in the  
house of a poore widdow, ne-  
uer would he expect that she  
should furnish that roome in  
which he were to lodge, but  
he vvould send his seruantes  
before hande, to provide  
all thinges in good order:  
What king is more potent &  
rich, then thou O Lord, who  
art king of kinges, and Lord  
of Lordes? and what creature  
is more poore or miserable,  
then my soule? Wherfore see-  
ing thou vouchsafest to come  
& repose in it, send thy An-  
gels before hand, to adorne it;

to purify it, to illuminat and perfect it, in such sort, as the superior Angels do purify and illuminat the interior. Send thy diuine presents, thy perfect gifts, thy heauenly treasures, that my soule with such celestiaall furniture may be adorned, and set in that good order, as is conuenient for the lodging of so mighty and heauenly a guest. And because O Lord, necessary it is, that my soule should also consent and do what lieth in her power, send forth I beseech thee, such forcible fauours, and effectuall helps, that may make it wholly, sweetly, and cheerfully, to obey thy diuine will.

And

And whē he hath craued this of our Sauour Christ, let him then turne himself to the blessed Virgin, & to such Saints as his deuotion especially affecteth, & craue of thē with humility that they wold obtaine for his the effect of his petitiō.

After Communion, let him entertaine himselfe in the Church the space of a little quarter of an hower, when opportunity serueth not to do more, and that time let him bestow in giuing of thanks to our Lord, for this most high and singular benefit, and in crauing at his handes new fauours and grace, that he may serue him better for the time



to come. If one had his neere kinsman or friend, which came out of the Indies, with great store of riches, & were desirous to lodge in his house, and that vpon great curtesy and friendship which he beareth him, and with a minde to bestow vpon him part of his wealth, certaine it is, that when he saw him enter in at one dore, that he would not go out at the other: but would keep him continuall company, and be merry with him, giuing him good entertainment for his welcome, and willingly giue him eare whilst he did discourse of his trauailes & aduentures, & when  
he

he came to receaue those rich gifts, which he bestowed vpon him, hartily would he yeeld him thanks, and seeing him of a franke and liberall mind, and desirous to giue yet more, no question but he would demand all that which were necessary for himself, & his family. In this manner ought we to behaue our selues towards our Sauour Christ, after we haue communicated: for he commeth vnto vs from the Indies of heauen, ful of celestiaall riches, which be of diuine and infinite value, and he commeth, mooued of sincere loue to lodge in our soule, to enrich it: and be-  
ginneeth

ginneth to bestow his gifts & treasure vpon vs, and hath a desire to giue much more: let vs not then by and by forget him, and straight waies busy our mindes in other thinges far different: for what were this else, but for our Lord to enter in at one dore, and for vs to go out at another, which were contrary to all curtesy, and opposite to all good manners: but let vs keep him company, and be glad of his glory, and all that seruice which the Saints in heauen, and the iust vpon earth do vnto him. Let vs giue him thanks from the botto me of our hart, for all those benefits which he hath

hath bestowed vpon vs, especially for this, that he hath vouchsafed to come, and remaine in our soule, by such a mystery & wōderful meanes. And for this purpose let vs consider who he is that commeth, which is God with all his infinite perfection: and to whome he commeth, & that is to a sinfull man, who oftentimes hath offended him: and what moueth him to come, which is sincere loue, and desire of his good: and wherefore he commeth, which is to bestow vpon him his merits, and the fruit of his sacred passion, and death, and the most pretious giftes of his grace,  
pur-



purchased with the incomparable trauailes and sorrowes of thirty and three yeares. After that Gods seruant hath well meditated vpon this, let him offer vnto him for a thanks giuing al the merits of his most holy passion, and all the vertues which do shine therein, & relying vpon these merits, and ioyning them in company vvith those vertues, let him offer vnto him, good purposes of the amendmēt of his life, and resolute desires to make it much better: and let him craue pardon of those sinnes and faults into vvwhich he hath fallen, in not communicating vvith all that purity

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 et  
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 e  
 rity and deuotion which vvas  
 requisit. After all this, let him  
 lay before him all his necessi-  
 ties, infirmities, ignorances,  
 falles, and all the rest of his  
 miseries, and let him craue for  
 himselfe newv gifts, graces,  
 vertues, and particuler fa-  
 uours, and vvithall let him  
 aske the same for all Gouver-  
 nors spirituall and temporall.  
 Let him pray also for succour  
 and help for all the necessities  
 of the Catholik Church both  
 generall and particuler: for  
 the increase of true faith, re-  
 ligion, and vertue, for the  
 conuersion of infidels and he-  
 retikes, and for the amend-  
 ment of al such as professe the  
 true

true faith of Iesus Christ: and the selfe same thing let him also request for all such particular persons as he is bound vnto, or hath any speciall deuotion.

And heere Gods seruant hath to vnderstand that of all the times either of the day or night there is not any one better to meditate, and pray, & to aske graces at Gods hands then this, in vvhich after he hath communicated, he hath **I E S V S** Christ present, not only as concerning the presence of his diuinity, according to vvhich he is in euery place, but also as touching the presence of his most sacred huma-

humanity, vvhich really continueth so long in his body, as the Sacramentall formes do there remaine . Whilest our Sauour vvas in this vworld in mortall flesh , in all places where he came , he bestowed particuler benefits vpon all such as with faith did touch him , or commend themselves vnto his diuine maiesty . He went into the house of *Zacheus*, and of an vsurer made him a iust man , and the sonne of *Abraham*. He entred into the house of *Mattheu* the publican , and made him holy and an Apostle . Trauailing vpon the way , a woman that had an issue of bloud , did touch him,



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him, & forthwith was he cured. Being by the sea of Galile, all that had any infirmities did touch him, & were made sound. Being in the temple, the blind and the lame came vnto him, and he restored sight to the first, & limmes to the last. Being in the field vpon a mountaine, there came vnto him those which were possessed of vicked spirits, & they were deliuered: there repaired vnto him all that had any infirmities, striuing to touch him, and vertue came from him, and he cured all. That which he did then visibly, being in the world, the selfe same thing doth he now inuisibly

inuisibly and spiritually being  
present in the Sacrament; so  
that such soules, as do enter-  
taine him with a liuely faith,  
and deuotion, or hauing him  
in their body, come vnto him,  
and with feruent prayers and  
desires touch him, those doth  
he deliuer from all their euils  
and doth bestow vpon them  
wonderfull benefits, and gine  
vnto the most pretious gifts,  
comforts, and very speciall  
fauours.

Hereof and from the ex-  
perience of this truth, doth it  
come that many hauing com-  
municated, are so willing and  
desirous to recollect themsel-  
ues, and to thinke vpon our  
Lord,

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Lord, whome they haue receaued, to giue him thanks for this benefit, and to craue new graces at his hands, to loue him more, and better to serue him, that forgetting all worldly thinges, and as it were alienated from themselves, and rapt in God, they would not spend their time in any other then in this kind of exercise. All other businesse for that time, doth grieue and afflict them, & this alone doth delight and giue them comfort. And therefore when either their owne or the necessities of others, or such things as they are bound to do, by reason of their state or calling, do permit

permit them, they do cōtinue  
 long tym with great pleasure  
 & cōtent in this kind of thāks  
 giuing. And for as much as  
 holy desires, & effectuell pur-  
 poses, be tried by the doing of  
 good works: to this thanks gi-  
 uing it appertaineth when a-  
 bility doth serue, that a mā af-  
 ter he hath receaued the blef-  
 sed Sacramēt, & with his hart  
 yielded thankes, as hath now  
 byn sayd, should shew himself  
 allso indeed thankfull for so  
 great a benefit, & do that day  
 as he cā, & is able, some work  
 of charity, and mercy, for the  
 commodity of his neighbors:  
 as to giue somwhat in almes,  
 to visit some body that is sick,



to comfort some that is in misery , to teach some that is ignorant , or to do some other spirituall or corporal work of mercy. For great reason there is, that vpon that day in which the King of glory hath giuen him so great a pledge of his loue , and hath shewed him such vnspeakable mercy, that he shold make his loue likewise manifest in the works of charity towards his neighbour, vsing mercy and compassion towards him , for this is the prooue that God requireth of vs for a testimony of our loue according to that of *S Iohn*: *This precept we haue receaued from God , that he which loueth God,*

God,  
neig

How  
m

c

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God, should for his sake loue his neighbour and brother.

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C H A P. XVIII.

*How to abstaine from the Sacramēt of the Aultar without iust cause, is an impediment to spiritual profit, and how that neither for negligence, or lacke of sensible deuotion, a man should giue ouer the holy Communion*

**A**mongst such persons as haue begon to serue God, and for that end do help themselves, with the holy & laudable custome of oftē repairing to the B. Sacramēt: many there be, vvhich abstaine from their ordinary custome of communicating, vvhich they did vse

once or twice a week, or euery fifteen dayes, according to the counsell of their ghostly Father. Such as doe so, by order from him, who for iust respect doth think it so cōueniēt, certainly they doe very well, to obey & follow that which he prescribeth, & nothing shal they lose therby, because that which seemeth one way to be denied them, if with humility they be obedient, God wil recōpence it another, bestowing vpon the new fauours & mercies, & giuing them such a disposition, by reason wherof, at one Cōmunion done vpon obediēce to their ghostly Father, they shall receaue more grace and com-

comfort then at many, taken  
 vpon their own wil, as after-  
 ward shal be hādled: But spea-  
 king of such persons, as (not  
 by order frō their ghostly Fa-  
 ther, nor by his wil & directi-  
 on) do giue ouer that custome  
 of cōmunicating, which they  
 had, & their confessor did wel  
 like of, I say that those which  
 do so only vpon carelesnes &  
 negligēce, as not to giue ouer  
 their other worldly busines,  
 or not to take paines to pre-  
 pare theselues, or not to bind  
 themselves to that care and  
 watchfulnes in leading of a  
 good & vertuous life, as that  
 holy custome requireth; plain  
 it is, & apparant to all such as



haue reasō, that they are worthy of blame, & to be condemned of a fault, seeing they do without any iust cause give ouer so good a custome: so glorious to God, & so important and profitable for their owne saluation, as before was declared in the beginning of this treatise.

Other there be, vvhō abstaine from the B. Sacrament vpon other causes more apparent, in which the fault or error, that they commit, and the harme they incurre, is not so easily perceaued. One of these is, because hauing at other tymes byn visited of God, when they did communicat,  
he

he preparing the for it, with a  
 spirituall hunger & liuely de-  
 fire of the Communion, and  
 helping them vwith spirituall  
 light to meditate the myste-  
 ries of this diuine Sacrament,  
 & to receaue it with feruour  
 of spirit, with sweetnesse of  
 loue, and deuotion; & giuing  
 them when they did commu-  
 nicate, heauenly motions, ce-  
 lestial comforts, wonderfull  
 peace, and tranquility of con-  
 science, sweet meditations,  
 great alacrity, and vigor of  
 mind, for al good works: and  
 seeing themselues now depriv-  
 ed of al these good things, &  
 that they haue no hunger, nor  
 desire to communicate, but

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faintesse & dulnesse of loue:  
that they haue no light to cō-  
template this or any other mi-  
stery, but a darknesse & con-  
fusion in their vnderstāding:  
that they haue not any feruor  
or deuotion, to the B. Sacra-  
ment, but a dry & cold dispo-  
sition: & that also when they  
do communicate, they feele  
not in their soule any spiritual  
taste or comfort: & that after  
they haue receaued the Sacra-  
ment, they find not any spirit  
or alacrity to good works, but  
a loathsomnesse to pray, and a  
griefe & heauinesse to al kind  
of vertue. When therfor these  
persons find this great muta-  
tion in themselues, they verily  
thinke

thinke that they be not well prepared to communicate, & that Gods pleasure is that they should not do it, & for as much as great devotion is required to come to the holy Communion, which they want, therefore they suppose that they ought not by any meanes to do it, & although their ghostly Father doth aduise them to communicate, yet can they not be perswaded to follow his counsell, or that it is conuenient for them so to do.

Such persons as these ought to consider what in this case they haue to do, & that is, that this mutatiō which they feelee in themselves, is a prooffe and



trial of God, & that his pleasure is, that as when he sent them the sweetnesse of his benediction, they were animated to communicate, and to do other good works, by reason of those motions & sensible effects of his diuine presence, which they found in their soule: so in like manner, that they should now be moued to go vnto the holy Communion, & to do other good works by the only direction & perswasion of faith, not void of charity, but void of the feeling & experimental motion therof, & be encouraged to work & labor in the seruice of God, moued only of an effectuall good will,

will, which is the principall part of charity, without any other sweete visitations and comforts, which according to Gods pleasure proceed from charity, & do make the works thereof easy & pleasant. And if in this manner they do communicate, and do good workes and perseuere in all their vertuous exercises, moued by faith, and vpon a good mind; then do they keep that fidelity & loalty which they owe vnto God, seruing him not only in the tyme of prosperity, but also in the tyme of aduersity and tribulation: & not only in the tyme of sweetenes & comfort, but also in the tyme

of griefe and desolation. And let them know, that by such a Communion, and such seruices done in the tyme of aduersity and discomfort, they do content, please, and glorify God, & merit for themselves grace and glory no losse, nay more, thē in the tyme of prosperity and spiritual comfort; because perseuering in this manner, they overcome, deny and mortify themselves the more, for the loue of God: and such persons are to know that the want of deuotion, which (as before hath beene said) is an impediment for the receauing of the sacred communion, is that which is voluntaty

luntary, and commeth of carelesnes and negligence, and because a man wil not do that which lieth in him to come with deuotion: but when the lack thereof is not voluntary, because a man with the help of Gods grace, doth vse all those meanes which for his part are necessary, as in purging his conscience by confession and contrition, from all his sins both great & small, and preparing himselfe to communicate with prayer & meditation; then the want of deuotion doth not hinder the abundant fruit of the holy communion: for although he hath not sensible deuotion, yet  
hath



hath he that which is the best and most principall, to witte that which consisteth in purity and good will, and a true desire to please God, and to do his holy will.

Such persons ought likewise to consider, that as this mutation which they feele in their soule, is a triall of God, and that if they perseuere in frequenting the holy Sacraments, and exercises of good works, that they do performe that fidelity which they owe vnto God: so ought they also to perswad themselves that if for this cause they should abstaine from the holy communion, and become more slow  
in

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in doing of good works, that it is the tentation of the ghostly enemy, to make them lose the fruit of the blessed Sacrament, and the merit of good works, & so to haue an entry into their soules by his temptations & deceits. And as that great Captain *Holofernes* did, who to take the Citty of *Bethulia* that was so strong and well manned, cut in two the conduits, by which the water passed from the fountaine into the Citty: & by this meanes was he ready to haue taken it, had not God miraculously deliuered it: euen so dealeth the prince of darknesse, who seing that from Christ:  
 who

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who is the fountaine of all graces , our succour and help doth come, to defend vs from his assaults , by meanes of the Sacraments , desirous he is to breake and cut in two these heauenly conduits and diuine pipes , casting impediments before vs , that we may not frequent them . *Palladius* reporteth , how a certaine very vertuous woman which did frequent the Sacraments was by a wicked man tempted , to commit sinne , which she vtterly detested: whereupon the gracelesse wretch delt with a Coniurer , who by the art of the Diuell laboured to induce the woman to yield her consent ,

sent, but still she resisted valiantly, and neuer would be perswaded to consent vnto any such damnable suggestion. The Diuell seeing that he could not hurt her soule, laboured to chang her outward forme and shape, to the eyes of men: & so he transformed her, that such as beheld her, tooke her not for a woman, but verily thought her to be a mare. Whereupon in the company of her husband, she went for help vnto S. *Macharius*, who casting holy water vpon her, deliuered her from that illusion: and he told her, that the reason why the Diuell had such power ouer her, was, because



cause she was negligent in re-  
payring to the Sacraments, as  
hauing not beene at the holy  
Cōmunion of fīue weeks be-  
fore: and the holy man gaue  
her counsell neuer after to be  
careles therein, speaking thus  
to her in great zeale. *Neuer*  
*(quoth he) abstaine from the cō-*  
*munion of the most pure Sacra-*  
*ments of Christ, because for this*  
*negligence this euill hath befallen*  
*you; for it is fīue weekes since you*  
*were at them.*

This is that which the Di-  
uell pretendeth, when he per-  
swadeth a man to abstaine frō  
the holy Communion, to de-  
priue his soule of the gard and  
defence the Sacraments: that  
finding

finding it weake & carelesse,  
 he may by his tentations and  
 deceits overcome it: & there-  
 fore Gods seruant ought to re-  
 sist the tentation, and not for  
 this cause to refraine from the  
 holy Communion. The ve-  
 rity of this doctrine our Sani-  
 our Christ taught blessed S.  
*Catharine* of Bononia who ha-  
 uing for some yeares endured  
 most pitiful tētatiōs of drines  
 of spirit, of being forsaken, of  
 distrust & tentations against  
 the faith of this most holy Sa-  
 crament, yet she resisted vali-  
 antly, and perseuering with  
 great constancy in frequen-  
 ting of the sacraments, & in al  
 other exercises of praiers, and  
 good

good workes , our Sauour  
Christ vouchsafed at length a.  
gaine to visit his seruant, & a-  
mongst other things he told  
her, how that vwhen any per-  
son did communicate, vwith a  
good conscience, although it  
were without feeling of de-  
uotion, yet did he for all that  
receaue the grace of the Sa-  
crament: & although he were  
tempted in faith or troubled  
with any other tentation, yet  
if he gaue no consent, he did  
not for all that leaue of, to re-  
ceae the plentiful fruit of the  
Sacramēt: And that such a mā,  
did not only gaine more by  
fighting against such tentati-  
ons, but also by Communica-  
ting

ting did merit much more the  
if he should receaue the Sacra-  
ment with much sweetnes, &  
sensible deuotion, which is to  
be vnderstood when the wāt  
therof proceedeth not frō the  
fault & negligence of the per-  
son himselfe, but by the pro-  
vidence of God, who doth by  
such meanes try & prooue his  
seruant, as now hath been de-  
clared.

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CHAP. XIX.

*How for scruples & vaine feares,  
we ought not to abstaine from  
the ho'y Communion.*

**O**THER persons there  
be, which although they  
haue not found any such mu-  
tation



tation in their hartes , yet being of a good conscience, they abstaine from the B. Sacrament , contrary to the minde & counsel of their ghostly Father, mooued vpon scruples & vaine feares , & because they think not themselves worthy to repaire so often to receaue the food of Angels , & that it should be in them more reuerence to abstaine from the communion. And when this temptation hapneth to Priests, the seruants of God , it is a thing of greater harme , because it doth not only depriue them of the profit of the Sacrament , but also the whole Church of the fruit of the sacrifice: seing  
certaine

certaine it is as *S Bonaventure*  
and other holy men do teach ,  
that so often as a Priest may  
lawfully celebrate, & yet doth  
not, that he doth, what in him  
is, deprive the most holy Tri-  
nity of glory , and praise , the  
Angels of ioy , sinners of par-  
don , the iust of grace & suc-  
cor, the soules in purgatory of  
ease & comfort , & the whole  
Church of a singular benefit .  
The remedy against this ten-  
tation is , for a man to belive  
his ghostly Father, and to rely  
vpon him , and to do against  
his scruples as else where hath  
been said . And heere we haue  
to note, that to come worthly  
and with due reuerence vnto  
this

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this most holy and worthy sacrament, may be vnderstood two manner of waies: one is conformable to the dignity & purity of that Lord whom we receaue, & that vvhich his infinit Maiesty deserueth: & in this manner none commeth vvorthily, and vvith due reuerēce, no though one should bestovv time in preparing himselfe to communicat so long as the world shal endure, no nor though he alone should haue al the purity & holynesse of all the iust men vpon earth, and all the Saints in heauen. Another manner to come vvorthily, and vvith due reuerence, is in respect of that  
which

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which God of necessity doth require at our hands, and by band of precept: and in this sort, all those that come so disposed, as in the premisses hath bynhandled, do come worthily, & with due reuerence: because God of his infinite piety condescending to our infirmity, would not bind vs to any more. And seing to iudg whether in this sence the penitent hath due dispositiō or no, pertaineth to the ghostly Father, who is wise & of a good conscience, a man may securely follow that which he shal advise him. And that Gods will is, that a man shold ouercome such scruples & feares, by the

M

meanes



meanes of good counsell, God hath by many testimonies declared. *S. Peter Celestinus*, who frō the stat of a poore Monk, was for his great holines of life, chosen to be Pope, moued vpon feare that he was a most vnworthy sinner, lacked vertue, & for other such like reasons, would neither celebrate, nor communicate. Whereupon touching this point he craued counsell of a Monk his ghostly father, who did encourage him to overcome those feares & to say Masse, which he did: and our Sauour appearing to him, taught him the same lesson, & so he remained ioyful, & with great quiet of conscience.

ence. *Cassius* an holy man and  
 Bishop of *Narnium* did daily  
 say Masse, to the great profit  
 of his soule: and to the end he  
 should not for any such feare  
 g'ue ouer that good custome,  
*S. Gregory* reporteth how God  
 sent vnto him an holy priest,  
 to whom he appeared, to deli-  
 uer him this message: *Do that*  
*thou doest, work that thou work-*  
*est, let not thy foote cease, let not*  
*thy hand cease & I wil giue thee*  
*thy reward:* exhorting him by  
 these words to perseuere in  
 his good life, & holy custome  
 of saying Masse. The reason  
 why God did thus comfort &  
 animate these holy mē by spe-  
 cial reuelations, was to teach

al, that his pleasure is, that his seruants which frequent this diuine Sacrament, should quiet and assure themselves touching this matter by obeying the counsell of wise men, for this was the rule which these holy men did follow, and that which God did allow of.

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### C H A P. XX.

*With what moderatiō we ought to frequēt the holy Cōmunion, that we do not therein exceed, nor do any thing contrary to due reuerence: & how we ought to leaue this to the iudgement of a discreet ghostly Father.*

**A**S there be some persons, which with hurt to their soules,

soules, doe without any iust  
cause refraine to communicat  
ofte as hath byn now sayd: so  
there be others which doe ex-  
ceede in the other extreame,  
desiring to come oftener, thē  
is conuenient. Of these some  
are moued so to do, vpon the  
common conceit and opiniō  
which they haue of the holy  
Communion: others because  
they haue had sometymes ex-  
periēce of the cōfort & sweet-  
nes of this most heauenly Sa-  
crament: Others are moued v-  
pō a kind of lightnesse, which  
is for emulation one of ano-  
ther, and to maintaine their  
good opinion, & not to be ac-  
counted lesse vertuous then

M 3          others,



others, & therfor are they angry & do cōplaine & be out of patience whē they are not suffered to cōmunicate, which is a plaine signe that they are not moued of any good spirit, but prouoked of lightnes. For all these kind of persons, the doctrine of this chapter shal serue & it is a thing of great importance, & much to the glory of God, assuredly to tak the middle way in this holy exercise, without falling either into the one extreame, or the other.

As touching the first, certaine it is, that al secular persons, as wel mē as womē, must not herein be ruled according to their own opinion, neither  
must

must they follow their owne  
contēt, their own cōfort, nor  
their own inclinatiō, but they  
must submit themselves to the  
counsel and direction of their  
ghostly Father: for if in religi-  
ous people, the rule of their  
order & obediēce to their su-  
perior do in this thing prescri-  
be them that measure & mo-  
deration, which they ought to  
keep: reason it is, that such  
as be not in religion, their  
ghostly father who knoweth  
the state of their soule, should  
appoint them that rule which  
they ought to obserue: And  
the confessor or spirituall Fa-  
ther, whom for this purpose  
they should make chose of, ought

to bewise, of experience, and one that feareth God, & who should not herein respect the comfort of the penitent, or to get credit with him, or any such like thing, but only that which is most conuenient for the glory & seruice of God, & the good of mens soules. And the penitēt ought not herin to labor, either by importunity, or intreaty, or any other such meanes to draw his ghostly Father to that which pleaseth himselve, for that were not to obey him, but cōtrary wise for the ghostly Father to obey the wil of his penitent, and so his iudgement & opiniō shold in this case be erroneous: but the  
pe.

penitēt ought to leaue his cō-  
fessor free, to determine that  
which in our Lord he shall  
think most expedient, and let  
him shew plainly that it shall  
wel cōtēt him whatsoeuer he  
doth therin determine and set  
downe. And let him also take  
heed that he goe not for this  
end vp & down seeking such  
a ghostly Father as doth best  
fit his humor, for then in pu-  
nishment of so disordinate an  
affectiō, God wil permit him  
to be deceaued, as it hapeneth  
to some persons which cōsult  
about this point (as also in o-  
thers) many ghostly Fathers,  
going frō one to another with  
a desire to find out him, that



would tel the that which the-  
selues wold haue, & whe they  
light vpō such a one, he is the  
only mā that doth please the,  
& him they prefer before a o-  
ther: & alas, pitifully are they  
deceaued, for doing thus, they  
do not conforme theselues to  
the will of God, but to their  
own pleasure & liking. Ther-  
fore that which Gods seruant  
hath to do, not to be deceaued  
herein, is not to haue any re-  
spect to his own pleasure and  
opiniō, but to desire only, that  
the wil of God and that which  
is most for his honor may be  
done: and so let him consult  
with his ordinary ghostly fa-  
ther, & if he think not him suf-  
ficient,

ficient, let him go to another, not him that is most for his own humor, but him in whō by the report of wise & iudicial men, thole vertues are to be found which for this matter are requisit. And let him craue of God that he wold put into his heart, that counsell, which may direct him better in his holy seruice, and that which may more redoūd to the glory of the same God, and the profit of his owne soule. And hauing done thus, let him verry quietly follow that counsell which he shall giue him, and be obedient, trusting in God, that when other directions shal be more conuenient,

that he will inspire it into the heart of his ghostly Father, that he may giue order accordingly. The holy Virgin *S. Lutgard* being a religious woman, did vse to communicate euery weeke, and this leaue which they gaue her, is agreeable to the mind of *S. August.* Very vvel content she vvas. The Abesse which had charge ouer her, thinking that this was to much, gaue order that she should not communicat so often, wherein she shewed her selfe very obedient, & God who had care of his seruant, did reueale vnto the Abesse, that his pleasure was, that his seruant should keepe her old  
holy

holy custome, and so her former leaue takē away, was by her superior restored againe.

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C H A P. XXI.

*Of such rules as holy Mē prescribe, concerning the often receauing of the B. Sacrament.*

**P**Resupposing that the iudgment how often in a week or moneth Gods seruant hath to cōmunicat that desireth his owne spirituall profit, ought to be left to the discretion of his ghostly Father; conuenient it is to set down those rules which holy men herein prescribe, that the confessor may know what he hath to do: for he hath to vnderstand that it importeth



importeteth much to be assured herin, & not to proceed at random, but to follow that light which God hath left in his Church.

Certaine it is, that in the vse of the holy communion, Gods will is, that there should be an order and moderation, how often one should cōmunicat, & that it should not be as men themselves list & desire. And this his will hath he declared in that he hath by his Church commanded vnder paine of mortall sin, that no Priest or Prelat though neuer so holy, should vsually celebrate or cōmunicat more the once a day. And the cause,  
why

why the Church hath so declared is, as Pope *Alexander* saith, & others affirm, for the great reuerence which is due to the B. Sacrament, to which reuerence it appertaineth, that a man should not go to it, so often as himselfe pleaseth. If then for celebrating and receauing when one celebrates, being yet the cōmon good of the Church, Gods pleasure is, that an order should be set downe, & hath declared it in that very thing wherein his great glory, & the profit of the whole Church consisteth, that due reuerence to the B. Sacrament, might be preserved, by celebrating ordinarily

ly no more the once a day, rather then he would that great profit which might redounde to the Church, if euery Priest might often celebrat in one day: hereof doth it follow, that it is great reason & very meet, that in particular communions, in which the common good of the whol Church is not so furthered, as by the sacrifice of the Masse, that there should be a straiter order and more moderation vsed to preserue due reuerence vnto so holy a Sacrament.

The rule which holy men do in this matter prescribe is, that when the ghostly Father perceaueth that one hath purity

rity of hart & true deuotion to  
communicat, & the more that  
he doth cōmunicat, the more  
he increaseth in purity, and  
doth more diminish his veni-  
all sins, proceed more forward  
in deuotion & seruour, in pa-  
tience, & charity, and in all  
kind of vertue: to this man cō-  
uenient it is, that he should  
giue leaue to repaire more of-  
ten to the holy communion:  
but when he seeth one that  
frequēteth the communiō, to  
lacke deuotion for that Sacra-  
ment, and that he doth therby  
little profit, because he kee-  
peth still his former passions  
of anger, impatience, and  
pride, hath small care of his  
tongue,



tongue, and doth easily without any resistance fall into veniall sins, which do breed a kind of coldnesse in his soule, to him he must prescribe abstinence and not to come so often. This opinion, which is of all holy men *Saint Bonaventure* doth expresse in these words: *In the primitive Church Christians had great purity of soule, & were fervent in charity, and so they might daily receave the holy communion: after that this great purity was lost, and that great fervor of charity waxed more cold, & lukewarme dispositions entred in: he that now hath that purity & burning charity of the primitive Church,*

may likewise communicate enery day, but he that liueth coldly let him come but seldome, & he that is in a meane, that is such a one, who though he hath not that great feruor & purity of the primitive Church, yet is he not lukewarme, but doth proceed in vertue & walk forward to arine vnto that great feruor, such a one must keep a mean in frequenting of the communion, that he may ioyne loue with reuerence in such sort, that coming often to the blessed Sacramēt, he may be inflamed with loue, & abstaining for some daies he may learne to haue it in reuerence. Thus saith S. Bonauenture. And S. Thomas affirmeth the same thing, in these

these words: *He that findeth himselfe prepared with deuotion & reuerence, may cōmunicat daily: for upon this reason in the primitive Church, the faithfull did communicat euery day: for then great deuotiō did flourish amongst them, but after that charity waxed more cold, that counsell which is to be giuen to Christians is, that they communicat euery Sunday.* This is the opinion of *S. Thomas*, & he doth confirme it with the authority of *S. Augustine*, & the doctrine of Gods Church.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XXII.

*Of the discretion, which ghostly  
Fathers ought herein to ob-  
serue, according to the doctrine  
of holy men.*

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**O**V T of this doctrine of  
holy men, we may ga-  
ther, what discretion ghostly  
Fathers haue in these our days  
to obserue in graunting or de-  
nying leaue to communicate  
twice a weeke: and when any  
particuler necessity doth oc-  
curre, or in persons of great  
perfection, or vpon some spe-  
ciall deuotion, and hunger of  
this bread of life, for a weeke  
or two to communicate once  
more



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more, seemeth not excessive,  
albeit great reason there is,  
that the ghostly Father should  
well consider & thinke vpon  
the matter, & not be moued so  
much for the comfort of the  
penitent, as for that he thin-  
keth he hath sufficient reason  
so to do.

To such persons as haue be-  
gunne to frequent the holy  
communion, & do reape little  
profit thereby, and experience  
teacheth that they do not o-  
uercome, nor mortify them-  
selues as reason would, nor as-  
pire to more vertue & a better  
life, but that through their  
owne fault they liue in a cold  
kind of sort, & want deuotiō:  
conuenient

conuenient it is to deprive the  
of some communions, to the  
end they may learne to feare,  
& by that means humble the-  
selues, & make more account  
of the B. Sacrament, & to pre-  
pare themselves with more  
deuotion for the receauing  
thereof: & especially this kind  
of rigor & prooffe is to be vsed  
towards those that desire for  
their own pleasure to cōmu-  
nicat, & that as a thing due to  
them of iustice, & be grieved  
& complaine if this leaue be  
denied the, for this is a very  
great presumption, & plaine  
token, that such soules, are  
farre from true humility, and  
the knowledge of their owne  
vnworthynes

vnworthynes , & of that reuerence which they they ought to bring vnto so heavenly a banquet. And let not the ghostly Father , any thing feare , that denying sometymes the sacred communion to all such persons as these , and for such causes as these be , that he doth them any harme , in depriuing them of that profite , which by cōmunicating they might receaue , because our Lord that liketh well to depriue his Church of the infinite suffrages of holy Masses , by not giuing licence , ordinarily to celebrate any more then once a day , for to preserue that reuerence , which is due to this  
most

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most sacred mystery as before  
hath byn sayd, it shall likewise  
please him very wel, that such  
persons be depriued of many  
Communiones, to preferue in  
them & others that reuerence  
which is due to this most holy  
Sacramēt. And if they do take  
this crosse and triall in good  
part, humbling themselves, &  
willingly obey, they take no  
harme, but profit, because as  
holy Doctors affirme & expe-  
riēce doth teach the same, that  
such as come to communicate  
with a cold kind of deuotion,  
through their own fault, al-  
though they be in the state of  
grace, yet small is the increase  
of grace which this most di-

N

uine



uine Sacrament doth work,  
whereas it is most plétiful &  
wóderful which it doth effect  
in them that come with that  
dispositiō which is conueniēt:  
& so by that feare & humility  
which they conceane by this  
punishment, it will come to  
passe that one Cōmuniō will  
be vnto thē more profitable,  
thē many others, vnto which  
they come with carelesse pre-  
paration. And sufficient it is,  
that this is the doctrine & coun-  
sel of holy men, that the ghost-  
ly Father, who is Gods seruāt,  
may beleue it and effectually  
put it in practise. *S. Bonauēture*  
speaking of this very matter  
hath these wordes. *Those which*  
*intend*

intēd to cōmunicate, & perceane  
thēselues not so pure, or do find  
thēselues without deuotiō, let thē  
take this counsel, & deferre their  
Communion vntill they be better  
prepared. And the holy man  
doth speake of those, who  
though they be cōfessed & in  
good state, yet through their  
negligēce they find thēselues  
som what cold, & dry, and not  
so pure from venial sins, & so  
deuout as were conueniēt: for  
these he sayth, that it is better  
and more holosome counsell, to  
defer a day or somewhat lon-  
ger their Communion, vntill  
they be better prepared.

And to that which som may  
object against this aduise, say-  
ing,

ing, that although it be good  
for a mā to abstaine from the  
Cōmunion, vpon feare & re-  
uerence, to so holy a mystery:  
that yet it is better to come  
vnto it, vpō loue, & for desire  
of so infinite good: the holy  
Doctōr doth answere in these  
words: *Both affections are com-  
mēded & praised in the scriptur,  
& so we see that Zacheus is cō-  
mended for that he receaued rea-  
dily & with ioy our Sauour into  
his house: and the Centuriō prai-  
sed, that for humility & reuerēce  
and knowing his own unworthi-  
nesse, & the maiesly of our Lord,  
he did beseech him not to enter  
under his rōofe: & necessary it is  
for the holy Communiō, to pre-  
serue*

serue both these affectiōs, & that  
 we do in such manner reuerence  
 this most high sacramēt, in which  
 God himself is giuen vs for meat  
 that in like sort we do desire it, &  
 with confidence come vnto it: &  
 that we do in such wise desire it,  
 & haue cōfidence in him, that we  
 lose not that feare and reuerence  
 which we owe vnto him. And al-  
 though loue of his own nature be  
 better thē feare, yet in some cases  
 & in some persons, the affectiō of  
 feare is more conuenient, and it  
 would be more hurtfull and dan-  
 gerous to be carried away with  
 desire, & that affection which see-  
 meth to be of loue. Al this is out  
 of Saint Bonauenture, and that  
 which in brief he wold say is,  
 that



that he which is with purity  
& requisit deuotion prepared  
for the holy Cōmunion, that  
it is better to receaue it, moou-  
ed with loue, thē for feare to  
abstaine; but he that lacketh  
that dispositiō, & through his  
carelesnesse is somewhat cold  
& vndeuous, better it is, mo-  
ued with holy feare, to deferre  
it for a day or more, vntill he  
be better furnished with de-  
uotion: not doing this vpon his  
own head or pleasure, but go-  
uerned by the counsell of his  
ghostly Father. And to that  
which some might obiect,  
that by this meanes the profit  
which by oftē Cōmunicating  
might be gained is losse, the  
holy

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holy man doth also answer in these words : To some it is more profitable to deferre somewhat the Communion. to the end they may come vnto it afterward with more reuerence and deuotion : because as I think , one receaueth more fruit at one Communion comming wel prepared, then by many , to which he commeth without any diligent preparatiō.

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## CHAP. XXIII.

*Wherin is declared . Whether the holy Communion ought daily to be giuen to some persons.*

**O**Vt of this doctrine of holy men before mentioned & set down for a ground, we gather how rare the vertue of

that person ought to be, to whom licence should be granted daily to receaue the blessed Sacrament, & how much, many ghostly Fathers are deceaued, that herein make no difficulty at all: And besides the reason already alleadged, which is, that holy men do say, that the persons to whom this leaue shold be giue, ought to be of that great purity of soule, & to haue that wonderfull burning charity, which flourished in the Christiãs of the primitiue Church, when the hearts of all was but one, and the soule through the straight band of loue one, and when charity & mercy made the

the

the goods of ech man common to all: besides this reason, many there be, worthy of great cōsideratiō, which here I wil set down. Most certaine it is, that whosoever doth cōmunicate euery day, that his ghostly Father doth giue him an open testimony, that he is one of very singular vertue: for this is a generall receaued opinion amongal people, that it doeth not pertaine to any, daily to communicate, but to holy persons: & therefore it is a thing well to be considered, how great daūger of presumption and vaine glory it is for weak foules, & subiect to temptation, although very deuout



& vertuous, that they should vnderstand that their ghostly Father hath such an opiniõ of their vertue: and that people looke vpon them with such eyes, & such a cõceite of holy persons. Ignorant we are not, and experience teacheth, how passing hard it is, to ouercome wel the tentation of honor & worldly prayse whē it is offered, as *S. Augustine* doth excellently note in these words.

*How great forces the loue of honor & worldly prayse hath to ouercome ones soule, & to make it fall none knows but he that hath much fought against that tentatiõ: for althogh there be no great difficulzy to abstaine frõ honour*  
and

and prayse when they are denied  
to man, yet when they are offered,  
very hard it is not take vaine  
pleasure therein: Ignorant also  
we are not, how by offering  
thēselues to the occasions of  
this tēration in receauing ho-  
nor & worldly prayse, many  
persons of a good & rare life,  
& those which with great tra-  
uaile had gottē much vertue,  
and great store of spirituall  
riches, in the seruice of God,  
in short tyme lost all, as *Saint*  
*Chrysostome* affirmeth: because  
vhen vaine glory did tempt  
thē, they vvere ouercome, &  
pitifully ouertakē vvith that  
vice in such sorte, that lea-  
uing the creator, hy put their

chiefe felicity in the creature. Seing thē it is so hard to ouercom the tentation of honor & worldly cōmendation when it is offered, and that so many persōs famous for vertu, haue vpō these rocks suffered shipwrack, & been cast away in this tempest, no sufficient reason there is that discreet ghostly Fathers, should offer weak and feeble soules, though neuer so deuout & vertuous, to so great a danger: but rather necessary it is, that they should nourish thē in true humility, labor to haue them wel rooted in that vertue, & to prelerue them therein: & to effect this, very conuenient it is, that the  
ghostly

ghostly Father should by no  
meanes let them vnderstand  
that others haue any great cō-  
ceit and opinion of them, and  
that he should, what he can  
cōueniently, take from them  
the occasions of all pride, as  
singular things be, which may  
make them to be famous in  
the sight of the world, & any  
thing else that may bring the  
honor & reputation: & to in-  
duce them what he can to cō-  
ceale all shew of holinesse, ac-  
cording to that which else  
where hath been said, trea-  
ting of the vertue of humility.  
And certaine it is, that many  
ghostly Fathers because they  
haue without discretion, cō-  
mended



mended their spiritual childre,  
set out their vertues, & giuen  
them occasion to make osten-  
tation thereof, that they haue  
been the cause that many ten-  
der plants haue with the nor-  
therne wind of pride, wither-  
red: & many that were well  
grown, haue by the iust iudg-  
ment of God, bin pulled vp  
by the roots, whome for their  
ingratitude and vanity he hath  
permitted to fall. To this may  
be added that by grating such  
leauē, they giue occasion to  
others that be yet infirme, &  
not so well prepared, that  
they also be stirred vp with e-  
mulation, & do desire & pro-  
cure the same, & that without  
the

the counsell & leaue of their ghostly Father they venture vpon it, supposing it to be very well done, seing the like leaue is giuen to others, who are in their opiniō but litle their superiors in vertue. They be the occasion also, that when any such person turns backward, that frequenting of the holy Sacraments, is much infamed & discredited among worldly men, and that their tongues do readily speake euill both of the penitents that come often vnto them, and also of their Fathers. And reason it is, as much as we may without any preiudice to vertue, that we should not giue any such occasion

occasion to weak people. Out of these reasons we haue to learn, that in these times those persons which may daily come to the holy cōmunion, ought to be passing wel grounded in profound humility, & so tried with iniuries, contempts, and diuers kinds of tribulatiō, vntill they come to loue them, & to thirst after thē, & that they be fortified with perfect and found vertues lik vnto *S. Clare*, or *S. Catherine* of Sienna, that the burthen of these tentatiōs do not mak thē to fall: & that their rare and extraordinary vertue be so great, & so vuell knowne, that all emulation of others may be cut of, & such  
incon-

inconueniences as haue now  
been spoken of, and others  
which may be objected. For  
certaine it is, that in the pri-  
mitiue Church, those vvhich  
did daily cōmunicat, vvere of  
great vertue as hath byn said:  
and that in these dayes, such  
speciall persons to vvhom this  
licence is to be giuen, requisit  
it is, that they should be furni-  
shed vvvith more vertue, then  
that vvhich vvas at that time  
cōmon & vsual among Chri-  
stians, because that being the  
the custome & cōmon vse, the  
tentation of emulation, and o-  
ther occasions before menti-  
oned had no place. For none  
had any cause to think that he  
vvas



vvas reputed far more holy  
then others, for hauing that  
leauē granted vvhich vvas gi-  
uen to all: nor any could take  
occasion of enuy or emulatiō,  
seing theselues might do that  
vvhich they sawv others do.  
And if any thinke that it doth  
hereof followv, that few will  
be found to vvhō licence dai-  
ly may be novv giuen, be-  
cause they be very rare that  
be of such singular & eminent  
vertue, & be free from those  
occasions & inconueniences,  
vvhich before haue been spo-  
ken of; I say that most true it  
is, & that hereof no harme  
doth followv, but the more  
glory of God, and very great  
profit

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profit to mens soules, for as much as hereby that is done vvhich is most conuenient in respect of that reuerēce which is due to the B. Sacrament, & the occasions of many sins are cut of, & good people be the more stirred vp to haue the holy cōmunion in greater reputation, & to prepare themselves for the receauing thereof, with more reuerence, more purity, & deuotion: so that by this meanes, one communion is more profitable vnto them, then many others would be, as before hath been said. And by doing thus we do also faithfully obserue the doctrine of the ghospell & holy men: for  
by

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by this kind of obedience vve performe that which the law of loue doeth require in the vse of the holy Sacrament, by taking the benefit of that large leaue, vvhich vve haue graunted in repairing oftē to the holy Sacrament, & yet we do not forget that holy feare & due reuerēce, which ought to be ioyned with loue. And for a conclusion, let Gods seruant perswade himselfe, that although he ought to desire, & to endeavour often to come vnto the holy cōmunion with due modesty, yet his principal care ought to be, that when he cōmunicateth that it be done vvell, & with that preparatiō  
vvhich

vvhich is requisit : vvhheretore  
let him prouide himfelfe with  
great humility, acknowled-  
ging himfelfe farre vnworthy  
to come vnto the holy cōmu-  
nion, & placing himfelfe, with  
contempt of himfelfe, in the  
very bottome of his own vn-  
worthynes, let him come with  
great purity, extending his cō-  
tritiō & the purpose of amēd-  
ment to all his fins, both great  
& small, which he hath both  
cōmitted & may commit. Let  
him alfo for the purchafing of  
this purity, help himfelfe with  
the Sacrament of cofeffiō, al-  
though his conscience doth  
not accuse him of any other  
fins the venial, & thofe alfo of  
the



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the lesser sort. Let him come with great hunger of this diuine banquet, & with a lively desire, to vnite himselfe vnto God with most feruent loue by meanes thereof. Let him come offering himself wholly and perfectly to performe his diuin wil. O what an heauenly store house of spirituall medicines shall he find, for the curing of al the wounds & infirmities of his soule! O what an holy table full of diuine food, & celestiall cōforts shall he haue, to satisfy his hunger, to strengthen his weaknes, & to glad his hart & mak it ioyfull! O what a rich shoppe & plentifull, shall he find full of  

diuine

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diuine vertues & iewelless, ful  
 of spirituall & celestiaall gifts,  
 to adorne & beautify his soule!  
 O what Indies shall he meete  
 with, to enrich it with heauē-  
 ly wealth, diuine furniture, &  
 the treasures of Gods grace!  
 Blessed be our good Lord, &  
 magnified be his holy name  
 for euer, who so bountifullly &  
 in such plentifull manner,  
 hath opened the bowelles of  
 his infinit & vnspeakable mer-  
 cy, that by one diuine and sa-  
 cred morsel, which pure soules  
 do with so great comfort, and  
 sweetnes receaue in this most  
 heauenly banquet, he hath  
 vouchsafed to bestow vpon vs  
 mortall men, all those goods,  
 &

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& spirituall riches, vvhich for  
the space of three and thirty  
yeares, liuing in the pilgri-  
mage of this life, and vale of  
miserie, yea suffering, & at last  
also dying vpon the Crosse,  
he did gaine and purchase for  
vs most vnnvorthy and mis-  
erable sinners.

FINIS.

ld Gentr  
d Begbie  
estra